THE MAN WITHIN

A PLAY OF NAPOLEON

In Four Acts

By HARRY DURANT

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THE MAN WITHIN

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Act of March 4, 1909.

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HARRY DURANT

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NOTE:

This play of the marvelous Corsican deals primarily with "The Man Within," because this inner man is the one known least to posterity. It is rather a disclosure of the deeply hidden personal side—the intimate private life—of Napoleon.

That he was very human and in many ways just like most of us is known to few.

However, his wonderful love for children and his longing desire to be a father for the commendable reason that he wanted his own flesh and blood to love, and to love him, and to live after him, existed in him always.

It is for the purpose of showing these characteristics in the greatest military genius of all the ages that this play is attempted.

THE AUTHOR.

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CHARACTERS

Napoleon
Talleyrand
Barras
Bourrienne
Fouché
Roustan
Hortense } Children of Mme. de Beauharnais
Eugene }
Las Cases
Josephine
Marie Duval

ACT I (1795)

Salon of Mme. de Beauharnais.

ACT II (1806)

Garden of the Tuileries.

ACT III

Private Cabinet of Napoleon in the Tuileries.
The next evening.

ACT IV

St. Helena.

THE FIRST ACT

THE MAN WITHIN

ACT I

SCENE.—*Interior in* 3. *Showing the salon of* MME. DE BEAUHARNAIS. *Entrance left in* 2 *and entrance right in* 2. *Up stage center are wide double windows from which a view may be obtained of the houses on the opposite side of the street, and from which the different characters look down upon the mob of people and the soldiers in the street below. The salon is quite spare of furniture and the room gives the appearance of scant comfort, in fact an almost shabby luxury is apparent. Scattered about are a few chairs and over right is a small table with a chair on each side of it. The color scheme should be rather glaring and the furniture of the period of* 1795. *At the curtain the stage is empty.*

Directly after the rise of the curtain there is the faint hum and murmur of many voices at a distance. This sound gradually increases in volume until it assumes the proportion of a sullen, angry note, continually growing louder, and now and then pierced by the shrill yell of individuals. When this outcry of the riotous mob in the street below has swelled to a dull roar MARIE DUVAL *enters right and runs quickly to the windows up center and gazes down at the scene beneath her. She surveys the shouting people a few seconds, meanwhile showing*

by gestures that she is both interested and alarmed. Then, looking right, she calls in a half-frightened voice.]

MARIE

Hortense—Eugene!

[*She again gazes down at the mob, once more looks off toward entrance right, then crosses right quickly crying*]

Eugene—Hortense!

[*Until she reaches the closed door right which she pushes in vigorously and for the third time calls, this time loudly*]

Hortense—Eugene! Come quickly—the people are fighting!

[*There is a short pause and* MARIE *draws back a little. Then with a bound* HORTENSE *and* EUGENE *rush by* MARIE *and run as fast as they can to the windows up center, where they gaze down as though fascinated.* MARIE *crosses left and stands behind the two children. As mighty roars arise from the populace these three show different emotions of alarm, fear, terror, etc., by exclamations and gestures. Glass crashes. Across the street a woman appears at a window, shouts at the crowd wildly and then hurls a large white dish down at the rabble. Following this comes frightful curses and hoarse yells and stones are thrown at the window across the street up center. Then* MARIE *suddenly grasps the two children and pulls them over left, away from the window, just as a large cobble stone smashes through one of the windows up center and rolls down stage.*

The children cling to her a second or two while the yells of the mob begin to grow fainter, but the disorder apparently continues. MARIE *releases the hold of the children on herself and comes down cautiously along the set left, then tip-toes center toward the big cobble stone. As she reaches one hand toward it gingerly,* EUGENE, *with boyish devilment, knocks over a chair and loudly yells "Boom!"* MARIE *screams with fright, her legs give way and she plumps down solidly to a sitting position. The children double over with unrestrained mirth at the incident.*]

MARIE DUVAL

[*Laughingly.*] Oh, I was so—so frightened!

HORTENSE

[*Suddenly.*] Listen!

[*They pause while the noise from the rabble seems to decrease. Then faintly in the distance comes the sound of the measured beat of a drum.*]

EUGENE

[*Tearing to the window center and clapping his hands.*] The soldiers—the soldiers!

[MARIE *hastily rises and, with* HORTENSE, *they again look down through the windows as the drum beats grow louder, the yells grow less, and now and then the report of of a gun is heard.*]

HORTENSE

[*Excited.*] Oh, see them run—see them! See the people run!

MARIE

[*Loud reports of guns.*] Mon Dieu, the soldiers are shooting to kill!

[*Covers her face with her hands and turns down. The children soothe her and the noise of guns and drums finally dies in the distance. All come down center, and then both the children suddenly pounce on the cobble stone and struggle for its possession. As they exclaim over it in childish dispute,* MARIE *puts a stop to the wrangle by taking it from them.*]

That is not nice. For shame! It is no better than the common rabble in the street! Suppose your dear mamma should see you?

HORTENSE

[*Saucily.*] Poof! No fear of that—Mamma is still in bed. She never gets up early when Citizen Barras is not home.

MARIE

[*Reflectively.*] Oh, yes, Citizen Barras—I—I forgot.

[*Lifts her eyes as though in silent prayer. Then to* EUGENE.]

And what do you think Citizen Bonaparte would say if he saw you squabbling like a ragamuffin in the street?

EUGENE

[*Stoutly.*] Citizen Bonaparte would say that it is not wrong to fight if you can win.

HORTENSE

[*Pouting.*] I do not like Citizen Bonaparte—he annoys Mamma with his attentions.

MARIE

[*Sharply.*] Hortense—hush! That is very rude.

HORTENSE

[*Laughing.*] But Citizen Bonaparte is *such* a funny little man and——

EUGENE

[*Breaking in.*] You should be whipped for saying that. Citizen Bonaparte is very good to us, is he not, Marie?

MARIE

Yes, indeed, and I am sure that he loves you both very dearly. He may be a little man, but some day he will be a big soldier. Little soldiers grow to be big men.

HORTENSE

Mamma says Citizen Bonaparte is very poor and I heard mamma tell Citizen Barras—— [*Pauses.*]

MARIE

[*With sudden interest.*] What did mamma tell Citizen Barras?

HORTENSE

[*Hesitating.*] I know I should not repeat, but yesterday, when Citizen Barras said to mamma, "Citizen Bonaparte will succeed—you must marry him," mamma said, "I must have money and position—Citizen Bonaparte is—impossible!" I heard every word.

MARIE

My dear, you must never speak of such things—it is very wrong.

HORTENSE

[*Aggrieved.*] But you asked me what mamma said!

EUGENE

I'm sure mamma likes Citizen Barras best of all. Why does not mamma marry Citizen Barras?

MARIE

[*With sudden emotion.*] Because—because she does not love him.

HORTENSE

But why does Citizen Barras not love mamma? I'm sure she is very beautiful.

MARIE

Perhaps—perhaps Citizen Barras loves some one else. I'm—I'm quite sure he does.

HORTENSE *and* EUGENE

[*Excitedly.*] Oh, do tell us whom Citizen Barras loves, please tell us, etc. [*They take hold of her dress.*]

MARIE

[*Impatiently.*] Oh, stop! You are very ill-mannered to ask such questions.

[*Spats their hands on her dress and they draw back*]

Eugene, get your soldiers and play with them.

[*Crossing right with the cobble stone in hand.*]

I shall save this to show to Citizen Barras. Hortense, come and see if mamma wishes anything. [*Exits right.*]

HORTENSE

[*Backing on her heels toward exit right.*] Eugene! [*In a whisper.*] Citizen Barras—loves—Marie!

EUGENE

[*Also whispering.*] I know it! Don't tell! Marie—loves—Citizen Barras! [HORTENSE *claps her hands in glee and turns to exit right, but* EUGENE'S *voice stays her.*] Hortense, please bring my soldiers. If you will you may also play with them.

HORTENSE

[*Delighted.*] All right. [*Exits right.*]

[EUGENE *runs up stage to the window center, looks down to the street below an instant, and then comes tripping back down center as* HORTENSE *enters right with the toys in a rather large box. She dumps them on the floor, way down front, and then runs off right again.* EUGENE *begins to arrange the toys, which are small soldiers, cannon, etc.*]

MARIE

[*Speaking from the entrance right.*] Eugene! Mamma says that you are to leave the room at once when either Citizen Bourrienne, or Citizen Talleyrand, or Citizen Bonaparte arrive.

EUGENE

[*Looking right.*] Why can't I stay and hear them talk about the fighting? [*Pouts.*]

MARIE

War is not for little boys.

EUGENE

Well, I wish Citizen Bonaparte were here. He always plays with the soldiers with me.

MARIE

Citizen Bonaparte will soon have real soldiers to play with. Now remember what madame, your mother, says —you are to leave at once!

[HORTENSE *enters right, running.*]

HORTENSE

[*Down center with* EUGENE.] We shan't have much time to play—mamma is dressed.

MARIE

Then you must play very quietly—no quarreling!

[*Exits right.*]

EUGENE

[*Placing the toys about.*] I wish Citizen Bonaparte were here. He has a new way to play every time and he *always* beats me, even if I have twice as many soldiers as he does.

HORTENSE

[*Very decidedly.*] Then if he does that—he *cheats!*

EUGENE

He does not. Besides, if he does, it is war and there is no cheating in a war—*everything's* fair!

HORTENSE

[*Derisively.*] Ho, ho! *That's* what Citizen Bonaparte says!

EUGENE

[*Spiritedly.*] If you do not like him, why do you always eat all the sweet cakes Citizen Bonaparte brings you?

HORTENSE

Mamma says it is right to always take the nice things gentlemen give you—*she* does! [*Laughs.*] You are jealous because Citizen Bonaparte likes me most.

EUGENE

I am not. Anyway, you do not tell the truth—Citizen Bonaparte likes me the best.

HORTENSE

[*Brushing away the toys in a rage.*] You tell lies—little beast!—He loves me the most!

EUGENE

He doesn't! You—you little—cat!

HORTENSE

He does!

EUGENE

He doesn't!

HORTENSE

[*Loudly.*] He does-s-s-s! [*Pushes* EUGENE *back.*]

EUGENE

Stop! If you touch me again I shall box your ears!

[EUGENE *starts to get up and* HORTENSE *kicks the soldiers and then slaps his face. Whereupon* EUGENE *gives her a good shaking, after which she grasps his hair with both hands and yanks his head back and forth. Then they both squeal and cry aloud as they roll about over the toys and try to maul each other vigorously. When the row is at its height the door left opens suddenly and* BARRAS *enters hurriedly.*]

BARRAS

[*Comes down and separates the crying children.*]

What's this—fighting again! What the devil is the matter with you two brats? [*Holds one in each hand.*]

HORTENSE

He called me a cat!

EUGENE

She called me a beast!

BARRAS

Well, whatever you are, you are both alike—you both have your mother's blood!

[MARIE *enters hurriedly and speaks as she crosses.*]

MARIE

[*Fearfully.*] Oh, oh, it is you, Citizen Barras. I—I heard the children crying and I——

BARRAS

[*Releasing the children.*] I found them squealing and biting at each other like two sewer rats.

MARIE

[*Impatiently.*] *What* was it about this time?

EUGENE

She said Citizen Bonaparte loved her the most, and he doesn't!

HORTENSE

He does!

EUGENE

He does not!

BARRAS

[*Giving each child a shake.*] Here now—be quiet—and be off with you! [*Shoves them toward exit right.*] Hurry up—get out!

[EUGENE *and* HORTENSE *cross right and exit right, slapping at each other and making faces as they do so.*]

MARIE

I—I am very glad, Citizen Barras.

BARRAS

What! Glad! Well, if those two little devils were mine I'd—I'd tie them together and—throw them into the Seine.

MARIE

[*Shyly.*] Oh, pardon, Citizen Barras. I—I meant that I'm glad that—that *you* were not injured in the fighting! A little while ago it was very bad in the street below. There were hundreds of them shouting and throwing stones. See—where some one threw a stone in our window. [*Points up center.*] Then the soldiers came and—shot the people down—it was awful!—just like they would mad dogs in the gutter.

BARRAS

[*Savagely.*] That's what they are—dogs, mongrels of the worst breed, and France would be much better if there were fewer of them!

MARIE

[*Beseechingly.*] Citizen Barras, I beg of you, do not speak so—so unfeelingly of our poor people. I'm sure you are not so cruel at heart. They are merely misguided. They are loyal to France, but they are following false patriots and do not know it. If there were only some one to teach and lead them the right way I know that——

BARRAS

Teach them? Ha, hah!—if everything goes right there will be some one to teach them within twenty-four hours and they will be taught a needed lesson—yes—if the teachers have to pile the streets with dead pupils.

MARIE

Oh, Citizen Barras, have pity. You—you frighten me. Suppose, suppose some—some of the teachers get in the piles of dead?

BARRAS

No matter—the government must live!

MARIE

Oh, Citizen Barras, you are very wrong, I *know* you are. It is not the government which must live, but the nation. The governments die, but the nation never. And the nation is the people! So be kind to our people, Citizen Barras, and—and please be careful of yourself!

BARRAS

[*Looks at her with tenderness and takes her hand.*] Would you be sorry, little one, if the angry pupils kill one of their very severe teachers to-morrow?

MARIE

[*Agitated.*] If—if anything—if anything happens to you to-morrow—I shall—destroy myself! [*Weeps.*]

BARRAS

[*Draws her to him.*] My dear little Marie, I am not worth such affection from your pure heart.

[*She clings to him and sobs while he soothes and comforts her.* JOSEPHINE *enters right and stands in the doorway watching them for a moment. Then she advances with a quick gesture of rage and stiffens when she halts right center and speaks.*]

JOSEPHINE

Marie!

[MARIE *hastily springs away from* BARRAS *in fear, but he keeps hold of one hand.*]

I did not know when I engaged you that you were so proficient in the art of secret love-making. I must remind you that that charming pastime is no part of your duties here. Attend the children—at once!

[MARIE *crosses right slowly, weeping without restraint, and exits right.* BARRAS *shrugs his shoulders and walks up to the window center, through which he gazes.* JOSEPHINE *turns quickly and follows* MARIE *to the door right, which she pulls shut with a bang. At the sound* BARRAS *wheels and they confront each other.*]

BARRAS

Well, I can see that you are ready for battle, but I must remind you that this is no time for—for domestic details. There are affairs of state——

JOSEPHINE

[*Crossing toward him slowly.*] Affairs of state! I call it a pretty state of affairs!—this starting to deceive a child of seventeen!

BARRAS

Be careful! Marie is beyond the poison of your tongue.

JOSEPHINE

[*Wildly.*] But not safe from the contamination of your touch!

BARRAS

[*Steps toward her threateningly.*] Hush—you Jezebel! I will not have you associating that sweet little girl with nauseous circumstance. She is as far above this decaying atmosphere as the heavens are above the earth. She is pure. To me she is holy.

JOSEPHINE

[*Laughs shrilly.*] Oh, yes—all of us were pure and holy—once!

BARRAS

Frankly, in your case it is very hard to imagine. Come, for heaven's sake, let us spare each other another disgusting row. Our arrangement has been of mutual benefit. Your beauty, your charm and wit—have been the means of bringing here the moving forces of the nation. In return, you have received my protection and my—pocket-book!

JOSEPHINE

And now you have—other arrangements? [*Laughs.*]

BARRAS

What is the use of our pretending? I know I am not your lover—I am just *another* lover, but I have never complained. You are merely the means to an end. I should like to be of the same service to you. France faces another crisis—the very worst in her history.

[*In the distance is heard the boom of a cannon.*]

Hear that! They are at it again. By to-morrow night some of us may be mounting the steps of a throne——

JOSEPHINE

Yes, a throne—or the guillotine!

BARRAS

Voila! The steps of both are slippery, so what does it matter? [*The cannon booms again.*] Come—will you join hands with me now that we may both advance and become better off?

JOSEPHINE

How?

BARRAS

You know very well how—marry Bonaparte!

JOSEPHINE

[*Throws up hands.*] Oh, that cursed runt of a Corsican again! Since you are bound to cast me off, and are so determined to have me married advantageously to —*your* interests, I wonder that you could not have chosen a man of wealth and position if not a man in stature! [*Crosses right and sits table left.*]

BARRAS

A man is measured by what he does, not by his height.

JOSEPHINE

Then your little friend is indeed a pigmy!

BARRAS

[*Intensely.*] You read Bonaparte very wrongly. Some day you will marvel that you could so underestimate this small soldier. He has great ability and a terrible will. He is destined to accomplish stupendous achievements. He is popular with the army. It will be a splendid match for you. Besides, he is madly in love with you.

JOSEPHINE

Hein—what is *his* love to me! Or any man, for that matter?

BARRAS

It should matter.

JOSEPHINE

Why?

BARRAS

The time is coming when you will have less love offered you—that is the tragedy of age. So the love of M. Bonaparte is not a thing to be despised.

JOSEPHINE

[*Impatiently.*] But you have told me this in substance before and I have refused as I do now! Sometimes I think he is half insane— [*Slowly*] this Bonaparte. He looks at me so strangely with his fierce wild eyes. Br-r-r-r! I fear him as I do the Evil One himself. No, Bonaparte can help me to nothing. Why, it is only a little while ago that he had to sell his horses to Salacetti for 3,000 francs in order to have money to live on. He has been struck off the list of general officers by the Committee of Public Safety, he is only just out of prison, and I'd be ashamed to marry such a poverty-stricken object. Bah! Look at his clothes!

BARRAS

[*Exasperated.*] What a fool you are! Don't I tell you that his chance for a quick jump to popular favor and power is good?

JOSEPHINE

It is too long a jump—it would be impossible.

BARRAS

At this moment anything is possible in France. Have you overlooked his great love for Eugene and Hortense? He would be very kind to your children. This should mean something to you.

JOSEPHINE

It is true that he is nice to my children, but then—only last week I saw him stop in the street below and play with some outcasts. So because he loves my chil-

dren means nothing to me, for he seems to love all children. Ah, no, my cold and fickle friend, you have not yet given me the least little bit of a reason as to why I should marry this moody little man from Corsica.

BARRAS

[*Crosses* R. *and sits table* R. *with sudden heat.*] Well, perhaps this is a sufficient reason—listen! I have just come from the Committee. I think I shall be placed at the head of the army in Paris, and this means at the head of the government, as the army is the real government now.

JOSEPHINE

Well?

BARRAS

Suppose I were to place Bonaparte second in command —what then, eh?

JOSEPHINE

Ah, why did you not tell me this before?

[BARRAS *shrugs his shoulders.*]

I see, I see, my scheming friend, you would make a bargain with me, *hein?* First you would try to induce me to marry Bonaparte because I am—in your way. I wonder why I am in your way? Then, failing in this, you are willing to appoint Bonaparte to be second in command, if I will marry him—is it not so?

BARRAS

You have it—marry him and I will appoint him to be second in command.

JOSEPHINE

And if I don't?

BARRAS

Well, my dear Josephine, circumstances are such just at present that I fear I should find it quite impossible to

—to—er—arrange for the payment of your household expenses, etc., and—of course——

JOSEPHINE

Oh, my dear Barras, I beg of you to make no further excuses—I quite understand—quite!

BARRAS

[*Smiles.*] And now that you understand? [*Pause.*] Come, because we renounce our love is no reason we must renounce our good breeding!

JOSEPHINE

[*Coldly.*] I am willing to play the game, but the dice must not be loaded and the stakes must be on the table!

BARRAS

Which means that——?

JOSEPHINE

That if—you appoint this Bonaparte to be second in command—that I will marry him. He is coming again to-day to press his suit. So I am willing, but first—you must make him the second man over the army, which means—over France! And the second man in France is worth something to-day even though he may be the last man to-morrow.

BARRAS

[*Relieved.*] It is a bargain, then. If I am made the head of the army, Bonaparte is to be next to me—and you will at once become his wife—is it agreed?

JOSEPHINE

It is.

BARRAS

[*Lightly.*] And now, my dear, sensible Josephine, as it is all so nicely settled, would you mind telling me what caused the sudden change in you? One moment you

were hot with refusal and the next cold with acquiescence. Why the sudden turn about—I'm curious.

JOSEPHINE

Well, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the second man in France may become the first, eh?

BARRAS

[*Grimly.*] Ah! I shall not so easily be deposed, I promise you.

JOSEPHINE

No—it is not that, my tired cavalier. I know nothing of political trickery. But in battles some men *must* be killed, you know, and if—well—if——?

BARRAS

[*Laughs shortly and pats her hand.*] *If*—the good God will only place my head in the way of a musket ball, then the second in command becomes the first?

JOSEPHINE

[*Hand under his chin and speaks with mock tenderness.*] Ah, Barras, you state it so—so unfeelingly—so brutally, that I—hesitate to—well, I wish you no ill fortune—— *BUT?*

BARRAS

[*With equal mockery, kisses her hand.*] Thank you so much, my dear, DEAR friend, but I shall try my best to disappoint you in this.

JOSEPHINE

[*Laughs.*] *So* like you—why is it you will never do that which I most dearly desire? [*Playfully.*] Now if you only cared for me just a little bit more I'm sure you——

[BARRAS *bangs his fist forcibly on the table and stands up.*]

BARRAS

[*Severely.*] Bah!—I have no time for these monkey tricks! [JOSEPHINE *arises also as the cannon booms*

again.] I think for the first time we understand each other. [*Crossing left.* JOSEPHINE *down.*] I'm sure we shall both benefit by the arrangement. There is much to do. The time is short and every moment is vital. All my friends are massing their forces in the Convention, and so are the opposition. Before the hour is up France's destiny may be settled—perhaps it is settled even now! I am certain I shall be chosen, but in politics one never can tell!

JOSEPHINE

Does Bonaparte know that he is likely to be second in command?

BARRAS

I have not told him, but Bourrienne, Fouché, Talleyrand, and all his other influential friends are working hard for him. He knows the situation.

JOSEPHINE

Why are they for him?

BARRAS

[*Impatiently.*] The artillery—the artillery! He is a fiend with a cannon—with five of them he can whip five regiments. I wonder where he is?

JOSEPHINE

I also wonder, but he will be here soon—don't worry —I know men!

BARRAS

Indeed you do—no one should know them better.

JOSEPHINE

[*Meaningly.*] To know them better is to despise them more!

BARRAS

[*Laughs.*] My emotional friend, despise me if you must, but keep Bonaparte free of your contempt. He is worth holding. [*Starts up.*]

JOSEPHINE

Hah!—I'll hold him as long as you do my pretty governess!

[BARRAS *strides toward her threateningly.*]

JOSEPHINE

[*Laughs.*] I *knew* it. The reason for it *is*—Marie! Now, now—violence does not become you! [*He subsides.*] There—that is more sensible. How shall I know if you have won in the Convention? I must know before anyone else.

BARRAS

[*Smothering his rage.*] Very well—I will send a message—I'll send it to Napoleon myself, so that he also will know.

JOSEPHINE

But how shall *I* know?

BARRAS

Keep your eyes open! If I don't see Bonaparte before I reach the Convention I'll hunt up Talleyrand, who is always everywhere, and tell him to inform Bonaparte that in the event I am selected to head the army of Paris, I shall immediately send a messenger to Bonaparte with a bunch of violets—your favorite flower, my dear, which I choose for the occasion in honor of my very great respect for you! By the time I am chosen I suppose Citizen Bonaparte will be here. So—if anyone comes and presents to your next husband violets of beauty and grace, like yourself, [*Bows.* JOSEPHINE *makes a gesture of rage.*] you will know that *I*—command the army of Paris!

JOSEPHINE

Suppose Bonaparte demands his answer *before*—the violets come? What then? I must be absolutely sure—I don't trust you—now, and I can't afford to——

BARRAS

Oh, yes, you can! Risk it, my dear, risk it! Can't you gamble for love?

JOSEPHINE

Yes, for love—but not for a home. There is a vast difference!

BARRAS

Nonsense!—All you need is just to make a home for love! Well, I'm late and must hurry.

[BOURRIENNE *enters left.*]

Ah, my dear Bourrienne, what has happened?

BOURRIENNE

[*Bows to* JOSEPHINE *and crosses to* BARRAS.] I have been sent for you. You are needed at once. I also want to find Citizen Bonaparte. Has he been here?

BARRAS

[*Crossing to entrance left.*] He has not yet come, but we are expecting him. I must hasten. Au revoir.

[*Exits left. Cannon boom again.*]

JOSEPHINE

How is it going?

BOURRIENNE

Whichever way the army goes. Just now they are keeping all the streets clear in the vicinity of the Convention.

JOSEPHINE

And the Convention—what will it do?

BOURRIENNE

The Convention? Pah! Whichever way the winds blow.

JOSEPHINE

I hope it is a Barras breeze!

BOURRIENNE

It undoubtedly is now, but no one can tell how soon it will change. The situation is extremely critical for the Government. Every moment the mobs are increasing in size. Barricades are springing up all over. Whenever the soldiers attempt to clear an obstruction the people fight like fanatics. Before this ends the streets will be rivers of blood. Mon Dieu, if little Bonaparte were only in command! *He* would soon have it over.

JOSEPHINE

You have much faith in Bonaparte?

BOURRIENNE

The faith of a pagan in his idol.

JOSEPHINE

Idols are false gods!

BOURRIENNE

Even so—I still worship!

JOSEPHINE

Ah, you are indeed Bonaparte's friend!

BOURRIENNE

And proud I am to be so. At the military school in Brienne we were classmates. He was always quiet and melancholy and was not popular, but I—I understood him and we became friends.

JOSEPHINE

Then you believe Bonaparte will be a great general some day?

BOURRIENNE

Just as certain of it as that darkness will come tonight.—Why, Citizeness, at Brienne he never lost a snow fight with the boys—he, the smallest boy of all! He knew more tactics than the books and could ask the

masters questions they could not answer, but which he could answer himself! The Infinite One has placed His hand upon him and made him a genius of artillery—a God of War!

JOSEPHINE

I hope he will be chosen to save the day.

BOURRIENNE

He is the only man who can do so. I wonder where he is. You say he has not been here?

JOSEPHINE

Not yet.

BOURRIENNE

That is very strange. I felt sure that I should find him here—probably playing with Eugene and Hortense. He has a rather remarkable passion for children, and all children love him.

[MARIE *enters right and stands in the entrance.*]

MARIE

Pardon, Citizeness—how do you do, Citizen Bourrienne?

BOURRIENNE

How do you do, Citizeness?

MARIE

Citizeness, it is the study hour for the children and I am disengaged. I should like to go out and learn what is being done at the Convention, if I may?

JOSEPHINE

I do not think it wise, Marie. I wonder that you dare think of it—with the people being killed right and left!

BOURRIENNE

It is only in certain quarters, Citizeness, that there is fighting. But the soldiers and police allow only the privileged ones to approach the Convention.

JOSEPHINE

So your going is out of the question, my child.

[*Enter* FOUCHÉ *left. He glares at them a second without speaking, then slowly walks toward them.*]

FOUCHÉ

Bonaparte—where is he?

[*The others draw back slightly, as though afraid of* FOUCHÉ.]

BOURRIENNE

We do not know. I came here expecting to find him.

FOUCHÉ

Why do *you* want Bonaparte?

BOURRIENNE

It is a crisis. France needs a hand of steel holding a steel blade. Bonaparte is the man. Besides, I am his friend.

FOUCHÉ

Still his friend, eh?

BOURRIENNE

Yes, and why not?

FOUCHÉ

Eh, *par Dieu!* In France to-day our friends at morning are enemies at night.

JOSEPHINE

[*With studied irony.*] We are all friends of Bonaparte, Citizen Fouché.

MARIE

I am, anyway!

FOUCHÉ

Ah, pardon, Citizeness Duval, I marvel that I could miss the perfume of your presence when my eyes did not behold your beauty. I'm sure Bonaparte may depend on *your* friendship.

MARIE

[*Bowing.*] Oh, Citizen Fouché, you are very gallant to-day.

JOSEPHINE

What do you suppose—she desires to go out on the streets—she even wants to watch the Convention!

FOUCHÉ

Well, there's thousands of women out there shrieking and cursing against law and order, and they are the ones who fight us the hardest.

MARIE

Oh, but Citizen, I do not wish to fight. I only desire to be near when—when—— [*She stops, a little confused.*]

JOSEPHINE

She would like to know when the new head of the army is chosen.

FOUCHÉ

[*Laughs.*] Ho, ho—the eternal curiosity of your sex—I see.

MARIE

[*Nervously.*] Yes, yes—I'm, I'm very curious—that's it!

FOUCHÉ

[*To* JOSEPHINE.] Well, why not let her go?

JOSEPHINE

What are you saying? Surely, Citizen, you are mad to think of such a thing!

BOURRIENNE

That sweet young girl—on the street—alone—the mob, or a drunken soldier—it would be horrible!

FOUCHÉ

[*To* MARIE.] Are you afraid—thou lily growing in a ditch? [*Goes to her and takes her hand.*]

MARIE

Oh, no, Citizen, I am not afraid. I love the poor people, and the soldiers are for the law, are they not?

JOSEPHINE

Yes, the law of desire!

BOURRIENNE

Or any law of their own making at the moment!

FOUCHÉ

Hush—you two! *She* does not understand. [*Steps nearer and speaks intensely.*] My innocent, all over France I am—Fouché, the Beast. Mothers mention my name to make their children mind. Men hate and fear me as they do the plague. Most women would kill themselves rather than suffer me to touch them. Ten thousand times has this voice caused a head to drop in the basket. These hands, so they say, are dyed in the blood of the French nation, and—and would you believe what I tell you—would you—trust Fouché, the Beast?

MARIE

[*Looking at him steadfastly.*] Oh, yes, indeed, I would trust you!

FOUCHÉ

[*Throws up his head and laughs joyfully.*] Ah, you see? [*To* BOURRIENNE *and* JOSEPHINE.] And they say that God is not good! A God who gives such a faith will never forsake us, and faith—it is the very best thing in the world!

JOSEPHINE

The child is hysterical—you have bewitched her. What are you going to do with her?

FOUCHÉ

She shall walk the streets of Paris alone—she shall enter the Convention. She shall be as safe from the human street-wolves and from the soldier-tigers, as if

she were walking the boulevards of Paradise. [*Laughs bitterly.*] I, Fouché—the Scarlet man—will make it so. [*Holds out his hands, which* MARIE *takes in both of hers.*] See—she is not afraid to grasp the hands which everyone else thinks are dripping blood! [*Leads her down stage.*] She shall know one little word from me—to speak should danger threaten, and the armor of God could be no greater protection. It is this—lend me your pretty pink ear, my dear.

[MARIE *turns her head, and* FOUCHÉ, *bending down, whispers in it.* MARIE *appears a bit startled.*]

Can you remember it?

MARIE

[*With wonder.*] Oh, yes—I—I could *never* forget that!

FOUCHÉ

Then repeat it to me. [*He releases her hands and she reaches up and whispers in his ear.*] That is right. If you are frightened to-day, just say that.

MARIE

And no one can harm me?

FOUCHÉ

You will be as safe as a little white saint!

MARIE

[*Delighted.*] Citizen Fouché—you have made me so happy! [*Runs to entrance left and turns.*] Citizeness, you do not care?

JOSEPHINE

It is madness—all of it—but if—if you should see Citizen Barras—tell him—tell him that I hope he will send the message.

FOUCHÉ

What message?

JOSEPHINE

About—about the decision of the Convention.

FOUCHÉ

Hanh!

MARIE

Oh, yes, I shall look for Citizen Barras, and—and tell him. [*Exits left.*]

BOURRIENNE

[*Awed.*] Citizen Fouché, your power in Paris is awful—it is uncanny!

FOUCHÉ

[*Bitterly.*] I am not so terrible, but the people think I am. I am the mad dog in the street from whom the people run—the mad dog which is not mad and yet which *every one* would destroy!

BOURRIENNE

[*Contemptuously.*] The people! We shall soon see how much longer this insanity of the people will continue.

FOUCHÉ

[*Warningly.*] Hold your tongue—should the people choose, you would no longer wag it. It is better to know everything and say nothing than to know nothing and say everything!

JOSEPHINE

[*Anxiously.*] But the Convention—what were they doing when you left?

FOUCHÉ

The same as ever—a drop of thought in a sea of words. [*Laughs.*] A Directory without a Director! The Directory is a rudderless ship in this storm until the right man is found to steer it.

JOSEPHINE

Whom do you think is the right man?

FOUCHÉ

There is only one man for this moment—that hot-tempered little Corsican—Bonaparte. Sacre Bleu—where the devil is he, anyway?

[*Both* JOSEPHINE *and* BOURIENNE *make gestures off and then the door left opens and* TALLEYRAND *enters.*]

JOSEPHINE

Ah, I feel greatly honored that you can give us a moment in this critical time.

TALLEYRAND

[*Bowing low.*] My dear Citizeness, the Minister is always honored when you are good enough to receive him.

JOSEPHINE

[*Bowing low in return.*] You are always so clever!

BOURRIENNE

[*Railing her.*] Why do you not blush at that, Citizeness?

FOUCHÉ

Perhaps the Citizeness has not done enough to blush for?

TALLEYRAND

Or done too much to blush for all of it, eh? [*All laugh. Then to* FOUCHÉ.] And how goes it with you, my mighty man of red?

FOUCHÉ

[*Gruffly.*] Well, had you been good enough to remain a bishop of the church, you could help us to-morrow by going about and hearing the last words of the dying.

TALLEYRAND

I would go back in the fold if I could hear yours!

[*At this* FOUCHÉ *turns his back and goes up to look out the window* C. *with* BOURRIENNE. TALLEYRAND *crosses right to* JOSEPHINE.]

My dear, it is too bad so rich a man [*Indicating* FOUCHÉ] has been so poorly brought up! [*Hesitates by looking up* C.] I met Barras for a moment at the Convention.

JOSEPHINE

[*Excitedly.*] Yes?—Yes, what have they done?

TALLEYRAND

Nothing definite yet, but soon we shall know something, because they are beginning to vote. [*Looks up center again.*] Barras gave me a message for Citizen Bonaparte. I expected to find him here. Where is he?

JOSEPHINE

All of us would like to know that. [*To* FOUCHÉ *and* BOURRIENNE.] Can you see anything of Bonaparte in the street?

BOURRIENNE

[*Turning down.*] Not a thing—we were watching for him.

FOUCHÉ

[*Turns also.*] The street is deserted. I suppose all the people are in the neighborhood of the Convention for the purpose of making a demonstration of public opinion!

TALLEYRAND

[*Sniffs.*] Public opinion!

FOUCHÉ

[*With some heat.*] Oh, sagacious Prince, even you can't afford to sneer at public opinion and the people!

TALLEYRAND

There is a vast difference between public opinion and —the people! Public opinion I despise—the people I love. Public opinion is a useful check, but a dangerous guide for a government.

BOURRIENNE

And the government is everything!

TALLEYRAND

To each and every one of us this one should be. Propped up by the army we shall be secure.

FOUCHÉ

[*Laughs.*] Hah, apropos of props, Citizeness de Stael neatly scored the government yesterday. [*With deep meaning now.*] She said that "A minister who is being propped up is a minister who is—falling!"

TALLEYRAND

Dear Citizeness de Stael. She always avoids saying harsh things. It is even her policy always to surrender early to—avoid a scandal!

[*The cannon begin to boom again.*]

JOSEPHINE

I am getting alarmed about Bonaparte. [*Goes up to window center.*]

BOURRIENNE

[*Follows her.*] I hope nothing has happened.

FOUCHÉ

Never fear—his big head will carry his little body to safety.

[FOUCHÉ *and* TALLEYRAND *also go up to the windows center and look out. This places* JOSEPHINE, BOURIENNE, FOUCHÉ *and* TALLEYRAND *with their backs to the audience.*]

TALLEYRAND

One would think some catastrophe had suddenly devastated Paris of its people. It looks like a city of the dead!

[*Pause. Then off stage a door slams.*]

JOSEPHINE

It—it all frightens me so. I wish Bonaparte would come. I am worried.

[*While she begins to speak the door left opens and* BONAPARTE *steps silently within the room. He stands quietly and listens to them.*]

Citizen Fouché, I think you should have him found!

BOURRIENNE

No—Citizen Talleyrand and Citizen Fouché must remain until Citizen Barras returns. There must be plans for to-morrow. *I* will go and find him. [*Turns and sees* BONAPARTE *standing left with a slight smile on his face.*] Ah, Napoleon—where have you been?—you have scared us to death!

[*The others all wheel and give exclamations of pleasure at the sight of* BONAPARTE.]

BONAPARTE

[*Who has eyes for none but* JOSEPHINE.] It has made me very happy, Citizeness, to know that you could —worry about me.

JOSEPHINE

[*Graciously.*] Of course—why, why—we were all worried.

BOURRIENNE

[*Earnestly.*] Napoleon, you should not do such things.

FOUCHÉ

[*Blustering.*] *Mon Dieu,* General, it must not be so again! Remember—you are not so easy to find as—bigger men!

TALLEYRAND

[*Quietly.*] Where have you been? Was it—important?

BONAPARTE

Quite important—to me. [*Smiles.*] I was only next door—in the courtyard. I came half an hour ago—just after the soldiers had driven the mob from the street below. I looked into the courtyard and saw the children—there were many of them gathered there for protection. So they were playing at war. You see—the rampant spirit of war has possessed the nation. Even the children have it.

TALLEYRAND

[*Jocosely.*] Oh, yes, and even the babies are in arms!

FOUCHÉ

[*Enraged.*] Bah! Why such a poor pun? And then, General?

BONAPARTE

Well, the children were building a barricade in the courtyard. I went in. We built one. We had sides. First there was an attack, which I led, and—we won. Then we changed. I defended and—we won again. Was I not a lucky general? [*Smiles.*]

TALLEYRAND

[*Severely.*] This is no time for child's play, Bonaparte!

[BONAPARTE *left.* TALLEYRAND *crosses to him.* FOUCHÉ *and* BOURRIENNE *in dumb play with* JOSEPHINE *over right.*]

I have just come from the Convention—I was looking for you.

BONAPARTE

Ah, yes, the Convention. What have they done?

TALLEYRAND

Nothing is settled. They were voting, but they may vote a dozen times before the numskulls decide. However, I saw Citizen Barras. He gave me a message for

you. [*Looks right. Then continues with voice lowered:*] If he is chosen for the head of the army in Paris he will appoint you to be second in command.

BONAPARTE

[*Coolly.*] Yes?

TALLEYRAND

And if he is chosen he will send you a message, a symbol to denote his success, and also yours, a bunch of violets!

BONAPARTE

[*With a little wonder.*] That is a pretty sentiment, but I don't see why——

TALLEYRAND

[*Abruptly.*] No matter why he does it. No doubt his reason is that he will not be able to leave the Convention at once if he wins. [*Leaves him and goes up.*]

BONAPARTE

Ah, yes, of course.

JOSEPHINE

[*Solicitously to* BONAPARTE.] You look very tired—are you? [BONAPARTE *nods.*] Citizens, is it too early for a little wine?

TALLEYRAND

Citizeness, it is never too early for good wine—like yours.

[JOSEPHINE *pulls bell cord over right.*]

FOUCHÉ

[*Grimly.*] I say—drink wine when we can, for there's no telling how soon we can't.

NAPOLEON

Fouché is never happy unless he is in the shadow of the guillotine, eh, Fouché?

[JOSEPHINE *exits right. Cannon boom in the distance.* NAPOLEON *listening.*]

Those are six-pounders. [*Musingly.*] The six-pounders are stationed at St. Honore. That point is not important to-day, but it will be to-morrow. [*Sits left.*]

FOUCHÉ

It all depends on the artillery. There are not over 5,000 of the troops in Paris. [*Goes up to look out window center.*]

BOURRIENNE

[*With enthusiasm.*] Oh, Napoleon, mon ami—if you were only in command! [*Sits up right.*]

TALLEYRAND

[*Crossing right to chair left of table down right.*] Save your enthusiasm, my loyal Bourrienne. It looks as if your former school-fellow would be the man. [*Sits left of table down* R.]

FOUCHÉ

[*Up center at window, but turns.*] I see a person here and there. The Convention must have come to a decision.

[JOSEPHINE *enters right with decanter and glasses on a tray. As she speaks laughingly, all rise.*]

JOSEPHINE

Annette has disappeared. It is indeed the day of the people. [JOSEPHINE *passes around with the tray, serving* NAPOLEON *first, to his evident delight, and then the others.*] So please pardon my clumsy service.

BOURRIENNE

Your hands can only give it a better taste.

TALLEYRAND

This is the first wine I have tasted since I left Connecticut.

BOURRIENNE

Connecticut?

TALLEYRAND

Yes, Connecticut—a state in America. The wine I got there quite cured me of any desire for it—until now.

JOSEPHINE

[*Placing tray on table down* R.] Do sit down, Citizens. [*She sits right of table.*] You can do absolutely nothing until it is known for certain what the Convention has done.

FOUCHÉ

[*Turns, lifts chair from up* L. *and brings it down center a little. Then sits in it.*] The Citizeness is right. We must be patient for a little while.

[BONAPARTE *has been absently staring off stage as though in deep thought meanwhile.*]

BONAPARTE

That is so—I had forgotten—you were a long time in America. And their great patriot, Washington, did you see him?

TALLEYRAND

I was denied a private audience, but I saw him. A very capable young man, Alexander Hamilton, arranged it for me.

BONAPARTE

He is all that is fine and noble, this George Washington?

TALLEYRAND

Yes, and more—a wonderful man—greater than his times. Why, Citizen Bonaparte, his people believe he *never* told a lie!

BONAPARTE

Perhaps he never had to!

TALLEYRAND

The Americans are serious in this—they actually believe their Washington NEVER told a lie.

BONAPARTE

Good God—How I am disappointed in him!

BOURRIENNE

[*Replacing glass on the tray.*] The Americans must be a funny mixture to believe that!

TALLEYRAND

The next generation *will* be a funny mixture—this breeding of English, Irish, Dutch and German, but—make no mistake—they are to-day the wisest and happiest people in the world, and some day they will be the greatest. The thing they can do the best now is to chop down trees—they know not the joy of planting, and they have only two absorbing passions—independence and money, but they have the right scheme of government, much better than our own.

FOUCHÉ

[*Replaces his glass.*] The good God alone knows what ours is.

BOURRIENNE

Or will *be!*

BONAPARTE

[*Prophetically.*] *I* know!

TALLEYRAND

Then indeed you have the gift of second sight. Come—what would you do to save our government before—to-morrow at sundown?

BONAPARTE

First, I would take fifty cannon and——

TALLEYRAND

[*Jeers.*] Hah!—Fifty cannon—where would you get them?

BONAPARTE

[*Raising his voice and throwing his glass savagely to one side.*] From the enemy! [*Pause. Paces back and*

forth—hands behind back.] Then I would take the fifty pieces to the Tuileries and load them with grape shot—ah, grape shot! Then I would mount them at the head of the various avenues through which the National Guard must advance, ten at this point, ten there and there and there, the ten biggest pieces in the Rue St. Honoré. Then when the 30,000 start for the Convention to-morrow, as they surely will, I would—pouf!—blow in their faces a whiff of grape! The next day the cemeteries will be a trifle fatter—that is all!

FOUCHÉ

But, Citizen Bonaparte, the Rue St. Honoré is not wide enough there to station ten cannon! You are wrong!

BOURRIENNE

I think Napoleon is quite right.

TALLEYRAND

Ah, pardon, Citizens, I think Citizen Fouché, for once, is right.

BONAPARTE

[*Shortly as he sits left.*] It can be quickly proved. [*To* JOSEPHINE.] Citizeness, the plans of Paris—Citizen Barras has some here?

JOSEPHINE

Yes—I have seen him looking over them—often. They are on the small table in the dining-room. Shall I get them?

TALLEYRAND

[*Rising hastily.*] No, no, Citizeness—we could not trouble you. [*With a quick glance at* BONAPARTE *and back at her.*] We will go there and spread them out. Come, Citizen Fouché and Citizen Bourrienne, this will be the best way to settle the dispute.

[TALLEYRAND *crosses right to entrance right, where he is joined by* FOUCHÉ *and* BOURRIENNE. *They halt there and turn.*]

FOUCHÉ

[*In the manner of a challenge.*] Citizen Bonaparte, you will also come?

BONAPARTE

No.

FOUCHÉ

Here is the chance to back up your argument.

BONAPARTE

I am not arguing—I have *told* you!

[TALLEYRAND, FOUCHÉ *and* BOURRIENNE *exit laughing rather derisively and making noisy ejaculations, so that the ensuing calm appears in strong contrast to the loud exit. There is a short pause, during which* BONAPARTE, *apparently suddenly realizing that he is alone in the room with* JOSEPHINE, *looks across at her as she sits at the right of the table. He rises and slowly walks toward her until he stands beside the chair at the left of the table, his eyes meanwhile on her in a fixed gaze.*]

Citizeness!

JOSEPHINE

Yes, Citizen Bonaparte!

BONAPARTE

[*Calmly.*] I have come to-day for my answer.

JOSEPHINE

Yes, I know—I know you said you would come for it.

BONAPARTE

Well?

JOSEPHINE

[*Temporizing.*] But, Citizen, I—I did not say that I would give it to you to-day.

BONAPARTE

Citizeness, I am a soldier. I know the ways of war. I

can give battle and lay siege, but I know of no plan which can show how to capture that most valuable fortress in the world—your heart! I can only assail it from every direction and with all the poorly expressed power at my command, but it is all of no avail if you do not care to treat with me. A soldier also knows how to accept defeat. So—speak—Citizeness!

JOSEPHINE

I am greatly honored, Citizen, that you should make me this offer of marriage, but I—I don't know what to say to you.

BONAPARTE

[*Rising voice.*] But, Citizenness, by this time you *should* know what to tell me. I have been coming here for days, and for days have I poured out to you a wealth of love which has torn my very soul to tatters.

JOSEPHINE

And yet it was only yesterday that you first told me that you loved me and——

BONAPARTE

[*Intensely.*] I did not have to tell you that I loved you—you knew—every woman knows when a man loves her, sometimes before even *he* knows it himself. Have I not been constant in my devotion?

JOSEPHINE

[*Smiling.*] Yes, Citizen Bonaparte, you have been very ardent—even impetuous.

BONAPARTE

Forgive me, but I am a stranger in the art of making love—I can only speak out as a man who knows what he wants and is not afraid to ask for it.

JOSEPHINE

Can't you see, Citizen, that I—I am overwhelmed by the idea of another marriage? It is not long ago that

my brave husband ascended the guillotine. These are hazardous times. None of us are safe and——

BONAPARTE

Have no fear for my safety, Citizeness. The guillotine is not for me. I am as sure to rise to great heights as I am sure that I stand here offering you my love this very moment. There is no limit to my ambition—no bounds to my ability. My destiny is written in the stars!

JOSEPHINE

You—you give me great courage, Citizen, and——

BONAPARTE

But I give you a far greater love—no woman has ever been given more. I have a capacity for loving—I am bound to make you happy. Why do you hesitate? Is it on account of the children?

JOSEPHINE

Of course, I must consider Eugene and Hortense.

BONAPARTE

Why, I dearly love them already. Your children shall be my children. I will share my future with them—they shall enjoy the fruits of my success. No family in France shall be as happy as ours. Ah, Citizeness, I know my love for you as I know myself, and that is an understanding without a single doubt.

JOSEPHINE

If I could be sure—sure that your love would last I——

BONAPARTE

[*With sudden emotion.*] *Sure!*—Mon Dieu, *Sure!* [*Starts for her back of table and she rises hastily as though startled. As she leaves her chair he catches her right hand and follows her imploringly to stage center where he compels her to listen to the words he pours out to her in a blaze of uncontrollable passion.*] I can no

longer hold myself—your beauty and grace has set me afire with a passion which will never leave me while I live—no, not even when I am dead! *Sure?* I am as sure that I love you as that the mother loves the baby at her breast. Sure? Just as sure as I am that Christ loved John! [*He grasps her arms in a wild outburst of semi-frenzied passion.*] Josephine—tell me—before this madness overcomes me entirely—speak!

[*She bends back as he holds to her—really moved, in spite of herself, by his vehemence and appears about to consent, but in the short pause which precedes the expected answer, the cannon booms suddenly and she straightens up quickly.*]

JOSEPHINE

[*Agitated and releasing his hands.*] No!—no, no, Citizen, I cannot tell you—just yet! I want just a little more time. You have unnerved me—I am upset! I promise—to—to give you a decided answer before—you go!

[*Crosses right as the voices of* FOUCHÉ, BOURRIENNE, *and* TALLEYRAND *are heard off* R. BONAPARTE *sits left and* JOSEPHINE *faces the entrance right as* TALLEYRAND, FOUCHE *and* BOURRIENNE *enter right.* FOUCHE *carries parcel of papers in his hands.*]

TALLEYRAND

The matter is still unsettled. Citizeness, may we spread out the plans here where the light is better?

[JOSEPHINE *acquiesces with a nod and then the three carry the small table up center, place the plans on it and weigh the paper down with the glasses, tray, etc. Also the three chairs are placed back and right and left of table.*]

BONAPARTE

[*Almost gruffly.*] The matter is settled as far as I am concerned. [JOSEPHINE *very uneasy.*]

FOUCHÉ

[*Seated back of table and facing down.*] Ho, ho! You are one of those who never make a mistake, eh? [*Looks at maps on table.*]

BONAPARTE

[*Immovably.*] Not about what I *know.*

TALLEYRAND

[*Right of table, seated.*] I venture to say that everybody knows more than anybody.

BONAPARTE

[*Sneeringly.*] Everybody! Are you three agreed?

BOURRIENNE

[*Seated left of table.*] Whereabouts on the Rue St. Honore, my dear Napoleon, is there room for ten cannon?

BONAPARTE

That part nearest the river. [*The three bend over the map and measure at the place indicated.*] You need not measure—*I* saw the map once—I *know!* [*There is a short pause during which the noise of children quarreling can be heard off right. It increases in volume to the evident annoyance of the three men up stage, who look up from the maps, and also of* JOSEPHINE *who rises hastily and goes up toward the door right.* NAPOLEON, *however, hears them and smiles at the childish dispute.*] Where are you going, Citizeness?

JOSEPHINE

To shut out the noise. The children are very ill-mannered to-day.

BONAPARTE

Ah, no—I beg of you, Citizeness—not that! [*She pauses.*] Have them come and—play with the toys. That will keep them quiet. Do—please! [JOSEPHINE *exits right.*] Children should not be shut out of so much —I do not like it. When children are under foot one's feet do not—wander! It is the fashion to keep them out of sight—away from the table at meals. A most deplorable fashion, for that hour should be the happiest of the day. Citizens, you should have seen *our* family at meals! [EUGENE *and* HORTENSE *enter right slowly, after the manner of children of their age.* JOSEPHINE *enters right behind them. The children bow to the men up stage and then run over to* BONAPARTE *and make their curtesies.*] Sit down and play with your soldiers and in a little while perhaps I will join you—and [*lowering his voice*] don't—make—any—noise!

[EUGENE *and* HORTENSE *sit way down front right center and begin to play with the toys. As they do so the noise of the people in the streets begins again and soon swells to an angry roar. When it quickly reaches a very loud note the door left is suddenly pulled back and* MARIE *bounds in the room. She stands so for an instant, half laughing and breathing heavily, with one hand pressed to her heart.* FOUCHÉ, BOURRIENNE *and* TALLEYRAND *stand up and look at her earnestly while the noise outside increases in volume.* BONAPARTE *alone remains unmoved by the outcry outside, or by her entrance, but sits and stares off stage with unseeing eyes.*]

FOUCHÉ

Ay, nom de Dieu!

[*Knocks over his chair and, jumping to the window up center, which he raises swiftly, yells imprecations at the mob. Whereupon the noise suddenly dies down and, after the cry of "Beast!" and "Murderer!" is hurled at him two or three times, it becomes absolutely quiet.* FOUCHÉ *then turns down.*]

TALLEYRAND

[*Right center—speaks to* MARIE.] Did—did the rabble attack you?

FOUCHÉ

[*Roars.*] Did the dogs dare?

MARIE

[*Still breathing quickly.*] Oh, no—it was not that, but —but I—I was rather nervous. It was only after the voting was finished and I left the Convention that I had trouble.

BOURRIENNE

What trouble Citizeness?

MARIE

It wasn't really trouble, but the people immediately began to swarm on the streets like bees out of a hive. They came from everywhere and it was almost impossible to pass. Some of them were very rough, too, but when any of them blocked my way I spoke to the nearest Guard and a way was at once made for me. It was magnificent—the manner of the Guards when I whispered that—*one* little word in their ears!

JOSEPHINE

[*Curious.*] Well, what *was* the word?

MARIE

I am sorry I cannot tell, Citizeness—that—that is a very great secret! [*An embarrassed pause.*] So that is why I was so long in returning home.

[*Takes off her long cloak and throws it on a chair, disclosing to view a bunch of violets which are fastened in her corsage.*]

JOSEPHINE

[*Who sees the violets and becomes greatly agitated.*] What pretty violets. Some—some gallant presented them to you, eh?

MARIE

[*Taking the violets in her hand.*] Are they not beautiful, though? I have a passion for violets.

TALLEYRAND

[*Chidingly.*] Ah, ah—my dear, you must not say that you have a passion for violets—you mean a *taste* for violets. Innocence can have no passions.

FOUCHÉ

So, so! Using my password to get violets, eh? Oh, you little witch!

MARIE

[*Laughing and smelling the flowers.*] You are all *so* funny about my poor little violets.

JOSEPHINE

[*Harshly.*] What is the matter with you—why don't you say where you got the violets?

TALLEYRAND

[*Smoothly.*] And did you see Citizen Barras at the Convention?

MARIE

Oh, yes, and how splendid he looked! When he spoke he commanded attention at once and when he——

JOSEPHINE

[*Who can hardly contain herself.*] Did you—speak with him personally?

MARIE

Oh, yes—it was he gave me the flowers—I—I almost forgot—he told me to be sure and present them to Citizen Bonaparte with his most sincere compliments. [JOSEPHINE *seems overcome,* TALLEYRAND *smiles in his knowing way.*] What is the matter, Citizeness—you are ill?

JOSEPHINE

No, no—nothing—give the violets to Citizen Bonaparte.

[MARIE *turns left, violets in her right hand, and crosses left to where* BONAPARTE *has sat all through this scene like a graven image—with his melancholy eyes off stage. She holds them before his face and gradually he becomes aware of their presence. He looks at them, then at her, and then realizes the significance of it all.*]

BONAPARTE

[*Slowly and with great intensity.*] For me, Citizeness?

MARIE

Yes, Citizen Barras asked me to present them to you with his most sincere compliments.

BONAPARTE

[*Slowly rising.*] From Citizen Barras, I thank you. The name—of Bonaparte—is in history—from this—moment! [*Suddenly he seems imbued with new life and crosses right to where* JOSEPHINE *stands, trying to look unconcerned.* MARIE *goes up to the table and joins the rest in dumb play.*] Citizeness, I have just had news so wonderful that I can't believe it is true. It is the beginning. From now on all things are possible with me. Believe me, and give me my answer?

JOSEPHINE

Oh, Citizen, your devotion and your ardour have—have won me in spite of myself. I—I will be your wife!

[BONAPARTE *seizes her hand, and presses it to his lips just as once more the cannon booms. He straightens and becomes the soldier again. He gives the violets to* JOSEPHINE *and, turning, sees* EUGENE *and* HORTENSE *seated on the floor way down front, and playing with the toy soldiers. At once he drops down between them and begins to place the small objects about him in new positions. He works very rapidly and intently.*]

EUGENE

[*Protesting.*] Oh, Citizen Bonaparte, you are spoiling our game—you *never* played that way before!

[TALLEYRAND *turns and sees what* NAPOLEON *is doing. He silently motions to* JOSEPHINE *and then to the children, then points to the exit right.* JOSEPHINE *quietly taps the children on their shoulders and motions for them to leave the room. They exit* R.]

BONAPARTE

[*Hitching around the toys like a boy and talking to himself.*] They have 30,000—I shall have 5,000. [*He counts the different positions up to five.*] I will have Murat place them—so! [*A loud door slam off stage left.*] Then when the advance reaches *there*—then comes the first round of grape and canister.

[*Claps his hands once, and* BARRAS *enters left all excitement.*]

BARRAS

[*Loudly—so that all but* BONAPARTE *are attention.*] Congratulate me—I am chosen head of the army of

Paris! [*All congratulate him boisterously. He looks at* JOSEPHINE *who stands over right and she nods her head "Yes."* BARRAS *turns to* BONAPARTE *who is still placing the toy soldiers about, and reaching down slaps* BONAPARTE *on the shoulder.*] Come, wake up, my little General. It is a time to rejoice. I am the head of the Government soldiers and you are—second in command! It is like this [*snaps his fingers*], and you have jumped from obscurity to power. In twenty-four hours we shall be famous. [BONAPARTE *rises slowly to his feet. He is center.*] I shall at once begin to issue and sign orders for——

BONAPARTE

[*Breaking in impressively.*] Orders? You may sign them but [*pause*] *I* will—write—them!

CURTAIN

(2nd Curtain)

[BONAPARTE *down on the floor arranging the toy soldiers again and all the others up stage talking together.*]

THE SECOND ACT

THE SECOND ACT

GARDEN OF THE TUILERIES

SCENE: *A secluded corner in the Garden of the Tuileries. Full stage with cyclorama drop to show the wonderful beauty of the garden perspective. At right, left and up center there is a grass terrace which is raised two or three steps higher than the plot of grass which covers the whole of the stage proper. This gives a hollowed-out, sunken effect to the setting and adds to its set-apart, exclusive appearance. Opposite 3, and dead stage center, is a circular fountain of white marble, with running water, very low in architecture and unobtrusive rather than otherwise. White marble steps lead from entrances right and left in 2, and another from up stage center to the square grass plot on the stage. In place of wings right and left are poplar trees. Up and down left and up and down right are low white marble seats of Greek design, without arms or back, one for each corner of the stage. Running right and left from the top of the steps center is a small hedge of box. The whole scene is severely formal and conventional. It is nearly noon and the light must be extremely strong.*

At the curtain the stage is empty and should remain so as long as the scene will hold by reason of its beauty and the striking contrast from the shabby furnishings of Act I. After a time a boy about six years old enters from up stage left and crosses right along the path, beside which is the hedge of box, and which runs along the up stage terrace. He pauses at the steps center and looks down at the fountain. Then he descends the steps and looks into the water of the fountain. For a time the child tries to grasp the fish in his hands and, failing in that, scampers back up the steps center and runs off right. As he does so JOSEPHINE *enters left in 2, slowly crosses* R., *looking all about and up center as she does so, then sits on the marble bench down right. Then the boy returns with some small stones in his hands, entering right and crossing to the steps down which he walks quietly so as not to disturb the fish, until he stands beside the fountain again. The boy has not seen* JOSEPHINE, *nor she him. When the boy raises a stone in his hand and throws it in the fountain at the fish,* JOSEPHINE *jumps perceptibly with fright at the noise and the splash, but watches the boy as he throws one more stone in the same way. Then she calls to the child in a sharp manner.*

JOSEPHINE

Here!—What are you doing—you little brat! [*The boy stands as though transfixed.*] Answer me—— [*Rises.*] How dare you come here?

[*Starts for him. Whereupon the child turns and runs up the steps as fast as his legs will carry him. Meanwhile* JOSEPHINE *claps her hands at him in order to scare him more.*]

[FOUCHÉ *enters left in 2.*]

FOUCHÉ

I am late?—I beg Your Majesty's pardon.

JOSEPHINE

No—I only just came. [*Sits down right.* FOUCHÉ *center near fountain.*] M. Fouché, can you not do something to keep the Tulieries free of these—these dirty, ill-bred children who swarm about the gardens at all hours and annoy me very much?

FOUCHÉ

Was that one of them I saw running away as I approached?

JOSEPHINE

[*Fretfully.*] Yes, the little vermin!—I was meditating and suddenly he threw a stone in the fountain and gave me a severe start. Then—then he ran off.

FOUCHÉ

[*Keenly.*] Your Majesty knows that the gardens have been thrown open to the poor by the express command of the Emperor?

JOSEPHINE

Yes, but what of that? It does not mean that the riff raff and the scum of Paris are to be forever under our noses. These wild, filthy children overrun the Tuileries—it must be stopped.

FOUCHÉ

[*With hidden meaning.*] Your Majesty does not care for children?

JOSEPHINE

There is a place for children—it is not here.

FOUCHÉ

Then Your Majesty believes that the Tuileries is not the place for children, that is, for *more* children?

[*She looks at him quickly before answering.*]

JOSEPHINE

What do you mean by that remark, M. Fouché?

FOUCHÉ

Oh, nothing, only there are many in France who think the Tuileries is the place where a child is needed more now than any other place on earth.

JOSEPHINE

Ah, I understand! I have no reason to be concerned over such idle gossip. My place is secure. I am the Empress of the French—Napoleon himself crowned me!

FOUCHÉ

Do not forget that the hands which placed that crown there can—remove it!

JOSEPHINE

[*Rises startled.*] Fouché—what do you mean?—is it as bad as—that? Have you heard anything? Tell me!

FOUCHÉ

I hear nothing—I know nothing!

JOSEPHINE

But about the child—you intimate that——

FOUCHÉ

I intimate nothing. I tell you frankly that the French people say that Napoleon should have a—son! That is all.

JOSEPHINE

[*Laughing in a forced way.*] Why, of course, *we* should have a son for the sake of the succession, but if God does not send us one—well, what difference does it make? The Emperor and the Empress will still rule!

FOUCHÉ

[*Grimly.*] The Emperor—yes. The Empress—perhaps!

JOSEPHINE

Do not think to alarm me, M. Fouché, by bringing me tales which start in the vile mouths of royalists and our

other enemies. Napoleon may be Emperor, but he is still my husband and—my lover!

FOUCHÉ

[*Intensely.*] Is he not different of late? Does he not have more fits of moodiness and anger? Can you not see the great change which is gradually taking place?

JOSEPHINE

[*Lightly.*] Yes, I know he has less control of himself, that he does not pay me the attention he used to, but this is all due to the cares of State. At heart he is the same and whenever I choose to make the effort I never fail to win my play with him—it will always be so.

FOUCHÉ

You are sure of him because you are sure of yourself, and that is where you make a mistake. It took art to win him—it will take genius to hold him—unless——

[*Hesitating.*]

JOSEPHINE

[*Smiling.*] Go on—say it—don't be afraid!

FOUCHÉ

Unless you present him with a son!

JOSEPHINE

[*Very much amused.*] Come, come, M. Fouché, and is this the matter of "such very great importance" which you asked me to see you secretly about? Napoleon's own son and heir I have had mentioned to me before—oh, *so* mysteriously in whispers—from a thousand different sources!

FOUCHÉ

No, it was not that which made me ask this private interview, but something else, and of almost equal importance at the present moment.

JOSEPHINE

Really, M. Fouché, you are beginning to spoil my morning. Very shortly I shall begin to be alarmed unless you——

FOUCHÉ

[*Breaking in.*] It is quite time to be alarmed. The one person alive in France whom you have good reason to fear—if he talks—is beginning to show his teeth. If he bites! [*Shrugs his shoulders.*]

JOSEPHINE

[*Nervously.*] If he bites? Whose bite have I to fear?

FOUCHÉ

Barras!

JOSEPHINE

[*Recoiling first in fear at the name and then laughing shortly.*] Hah!—Barras? This—this Barras is well muzzled!

FOUCHÉ

Yes, but *not* gagged!

JOSEPHINE

[*Quickly.*] What is he saying?

FOUCHÉ

Nothing yet, but I'm afraid he will——

JOSEPHINE

[*In a sudden burst of fury.*] Miserable dog!—He—to whom I gave the best in me! Have him taken out at sunrise and—shot! He's not a prisoner of war—he has committed treason—that's enough—have him shot!

FOUCHÉ

[*Alarmed at her outburst. Looks around.*] I beg Your Majesty to calm yourself. This is not the time for rage. The situation demands calmness and cool thought.

JOSEPHINE

[*With low fury.*] I say have him shot—to-morrow morning!

FOUCHÉ

The last man who was led out and shot in the manner such as you now wish nearly cost His Majesty the empire. It will never be done again while he rules.

JOSEPHINE

[*In sudden calm.*] Well, Barras must want something—what is it?

FOUCHÉ

Now you are sensible. If every man who is mixed up in a Bourbon plot was to be shot in the morning the population of France would be much smaller to-morrow night.

JOSEPHINE

[*Impatiently.*] You must hurry and come to the point. This little spot is a favorite place of Napoleon's in which to rest and meditate—he is likely to come here any moment. Tell me the worst—what does this Barras want?

FOUCHÉ

Do you remember Marie Duval?

JOSEPHINE

[*Pondering.*] Marie Duval?—Marie Duval! Ah, yes, of course. She was the governess of the children when they were small. What about her? Did Barras not marry her?

FOUCHÉ

[*Speaks quickly.*] No. They were to marry long ago, but her mother became ill and she would not leave her. Then Barras got mixed up in the Bourbon plot and was exiled. When he dared to return to the country he was arrested, as you know, and put in prison where he has since remained.

JOSEPHINE

Yes, yes—I know, but what about Marie Duval?

FOUCHÉ

Barras has sent Marie Duval to me.

JOSEPHINE

[*Coldly.*] For what?

FOUCHÉ

I am to take her to you.

JOSEPHINE

Again I ask—what for?

FOUCHÉ

Then you are to gain an audience with His Majesty for her.

JOSEPHINE

Why?

FOUCHÉ

She will then intercede for Barras—she will promise His Majesty that Barras will leave the country and never return if Napoleon will pardon him and set him free.

JOSEPHINE

Why does Barras send this little Duval?

FOUCHÉ

I really think it is her plan rather than his.

JOSEPHINE

[*Suspicious.*] Why does she think *she* can—persuade His Majesty?

FOUCHÉ

She says she once did him a service. She believes that if this service is recalled to his mind that he will pardon Barras—for her sake!

JOSEPHINE

And if I don't do this for—for Barras?

FOUCHÉ

[*Slowly.*] He will show his teeth, and between those teeth of his, His Majesty may find a package of very damaging letters which were once written by a woman who was not—well, not then such a person of importance as she is now!

JOSEPHINE

And does Marie Duval know this?

FOUCHÉ

She knows nothing—she suspects nothing. She is not that kind of a woman.

JOSEPHINE

[*Wavering.*] Where is she?

FOUCHÉ

She is waiting for me—now—near the Tuileries.

JOSEPHINE

If I arrange for her to see and talk with His Majesty that I shall have the letters and, if Barras is pardoned, he will leave the country?

FOUCHÉ

Yes, yes—of course—*how* suspicious you are!

JOSEPHINE

I need to be. And this Marie Duval—will she be foolish enough to marry Barras?

FOUCHÉ

Pah—the curiosity of you women makes a man insane. Surely she will marry him and *you* ought to be glad of it!

JOSEPHINE

[*With decision.*] Very well! [*Looks off left.*] There is His Majesty coming now. We must hurry or he will

see us together! [*Crosses right and* FOUCHÉ *follows her.*] Bring her to me so I may talk with her first.

[JOSEPHINE *and* FOUCHÉ *exit hurriedly right in 2.*]

[*There is a slight pause after the exit of* JOSEPHINE *and* FOUCHÉ *to allow them presumably to pass out of sight, after which* NAPOLEON *slowly enters along the terrace up left. His attitude is characteristic—hands clasped behind him and head bowed with eyes on the ground, denoting deep meditation. He pauses center and turns up with his back toward the audience, to spend an instant looking along the avenue of trees which stretch before him. Then he turns down and descends the steps center to the grass plot. He comes down right until he nears the seat way down right, when the small boy again enters up right. The child is straddling a stick, on the end of which, before him, is a horse's head. The* BOY *gallops across left, urging his steed to a fast pace. At the sound* NAPOLEON *turns, sees the youngster at play, and turns down with a smile as the* BOY *exits left. But the* BOY *no sooner disappears than he is immediately back again, entering up left and goes galloping across right along the upstage terrace. As he reaches the head of the steps center he stumbles and falls, throwing the stick he is riding down to the grass plot below, and landing on his own stomach.* NAPOLEON *turns and starts up for the* BOY, *who quickly scrambles to his feet and runs off right, leaving his plaything down near the foun-*

tain. NAPOLEON *picks it up, smiles at it whimsically and turns right, still holding the toy in his hand, as* FOUCHÉ *enters right in 2 and descends the steps to where* NAPOLEON *is standing.*]

NAPOLEON

[*Wistfully.*] Ah, Fouché, to be back again and riding a fiery, untamed steed like this—that would be real happiness, Fouché. [*Holds out the cheap toy.*]

FOUCHÉ

Sire, most of us would find happiness if we paid less attention to what we rode and more to where we were going!

NAPOLEON

[*Reflectively, looking at the toy in his hand.*] Toys, all toys! Men, women, armies, nations, and yet to own them all—everything—does not bring the happiness which this little boy has.

FOUCHÉ

What boy, Your Majesty?

NAPOLEON

[*Sighing.*] Oh, I don't know. He was just playing there [*points up*] when suddenly he caught sight of me and ran off. I suppose I frightened him, and I—I wish he would have stayed with me a little while.

FOUCHÉ

[*Softly.*] Perhaps he will come back. Your Majesty is very fond of children!

NAPOLEON

Children? They are the only real, honest things in the world, Fouché. The mountain of my ambition is a huge thing, but at the very top there stands—a boy—*my* boy! He's always there, Fouché—watching and waiting for me to come and get him, but with a million soldiers and a billion francs I can neither win him nor buy him! That

is the summit of my happiness, Fouché, and there's nothing else like it in the world. Oh, what would it mean to feel the touch of my own flesh, to know that he was mine—*all* mine—body and soul, yes, soul, to know that he loved me, not for what I *am* but for what I am to *him!* It is in the few calm moments like these which I am allowed that such thoughts almost drive me mad.

FOUCHÉ

I did not—did not know, Your Majesty, that you felt so strongly on—this!

NAPOLEON

No? Like the rest, you think me reserved and severe. That is the way I have to be to maintain my authority over men who are superior in age and experience. Underneath I have human weaknesses—— But when I yield to them in public, I shall lose my power. Listen to me, Fouché! Before I was thirty I had exhausted every human emotion except ambition—and that ambition will never be completely satisfied until I have a son.

FOUCHÉ

Sire, your people feel just as strongly on the matter. I hear it everywhere, and from all classes! It has ceased to be a want with them—it is a demand.

NAPOLEON

Yes, yes—I know, I know!

FOUCHÉ

That was one of the two things I came to see you about expressly to-day.

NAPOLEON

[*Shortly.*] Well, what was the other?

FOUCHÉ

Bourrienne.

NAPOLEON

[*Between his teeth.*] Bourrienne!

FOUCHÉ

Yes. He arrived from Belgium last night. He gave me his word he would present himself to you by this time to-day.

NAPOLEON

Does he know why I summoned him in such haste?

FOUCHÉ

Sire, I did not tell him.

NAPOLEON

Fouché, you have always been a most efficient Minister of Police. Have you determined the amount which Bourrienne has stolen from the funds?

FOUCHÉ

Something over a million francs, Your Majesty.

NAPOLEON

A million—a million! He did not lose any time! Do you hear any sentiment expressed for the political prisoners? [FOUCHÉ *shakes his head "no."*] There is no agitation for any of them in particular—for Barras?

FOUCHÉ

[*Up center.*] I hear no expressions from the people concerning Barras.

NAPOLEON

H'm—when things are quiet there is likely to be noise near at hand!

FOUCHÉ

[*Looking off up left.*] I think Bourrienne is coming.

NAPOLEON

[*Change of manner.*] Ah—then you had better go and leave us together.

FOUCHÉ

[*Coming down.*] Your Majesty then has nothing of importance in hand for me?

NAPOLEON

[*Looks up left.*] No, Fouché, no!

[FOUCHÉ *exits right in 2. Short pause.* BOURRIENNE *enters up left, walking briskly along the upstage terrace, and comes down the steps center.*]

BOURRIENNE

[*With exaggerated enthusiasm.*] Ah, Napoleon, you are looking the picture of health. I came as fast as——

NAPOLEON

[*Icily.*] Since when have I ceased to be your Emperor?

BOURRIENNE

[*Confused.*] Only—only since you have ceased to be —my friend!—your—Your Majesty!

NAPOLEON

I have never run from a friend—I have never pursued a foe!

BOURRIENNE

Yes, I know that, Your Majesty, but—but I—I do not understand?

NAPOLEON

I suppose not! Bourrienne, tell me what do you understand to be the unpardonable sin?

BOURRIENNE

[*Haltingly.*] Why, I suppose it is to—deny God—isn't it? [NAPOLEON *remains silent.*] Really, I—I don't think I have ever given the matter much thought.

NAPOLEON

[*With deep scorn.*] I'm quite sure you never have. No—the unpardonable sin is NOT to deny God—it is—ingratitude! When a man becomes ungrateful he reaches the lowest depths of human depravity. Did that ever occur to you before?

BOURRIENNE

[*With spirit.*] It might have occurred to me, but it never could have applied to me!

NAPOLEON

[*Suggesting hidden rage.*] No?—Very well—we shall see! [*Short pause.*] Bourrienne, at Brienne we were school fellows. Among the aristocrats I was a charity boy—thin and poorly clothed and friendless. I suffered the tortures of the damned when I was made fun of, and everyone did make fun of me—but you! That I have never forgotten. The trappings of the imperial throne have been for the people—not for you. I am always the same—men like me never change, and—my presentiments never deceive me. It is you who have changed and now I have a presentiment that we must part as completely as though one of us were dead!

BOURRIENNE

[*Bowing.*] You are the Emperor. But, Sire, I would remind you that it was you who called the unpardonable sin—ingratitude!

NAPOLEON

And do you dare to hint that it is I who am ungrateful? I who took you and led you safely across that road which led to the guillotine, I who made you my confidant and secretary, made you Ambassador to Belgium and showered honors upon you—everything!

BOURRIENNE

Everything—yes, everything but money!

NAPOLEON

So—that is why you plunged your long arms into the treasury of France and took out over a million francs—is it? You had to have money?

BOURRIENNE

[*Short pause and then lightly.*] What did you expect me to do after the example you have set me?

NAPOLEON

[*Ominously calm.*] Name one example!

BOURRIENNE

How about the Pope? Hah—you did not even spare the church!

NAPOLEON

What a poor fool you are, Bourrienne! You, who have no interest but self—you, who cannot see that what I have done is for France!

BOURRIENNE

I do not see that it is any worse to rob France than it is to rob Austria, or the Pope!

NAPOLEON

[*In a low voice and rapidly.*] If making the courts of Europe and the Church of Rome pay toll, if filling Paris with the world's art treasures, if raising France from bankruptcy to be the richest nation in the world—if—if all this is robbery!—THEN INDEED I am a thief!

BOURRIENNE

[*Shrugs shoulders.*] You are making that distinction without the difference!

NAPOLEON

The difference is in your decayed morals and my ripe patriotism. I could devastate France to-day if it would bring greater prosperity to-morrow—I could see a hundred thousand men slain to protect the honor of France. Yes—I would make the nations of the world pay tribute in a golden stream—NOT to me but—to France! Never has it been for my own pocket, but you—yes, you rob your own people for yourself, because you are dead to all sense of shame. [*Here* NAPOLEON *works himself into a terrible fit of rage. The child's toy he still keeps in his hand and now he begins to gesture with it.*] Because you are in mind and heart a thief! And now you must pay for it—you ingrate, you bastard son of France! [*He*

emphasizes each word "ingrate" and "bastard" each time by smashing the toy on the top of the marble seat down right. As he does this the child enters up right and beholds NAPOLEON *breaking his toy to pieces. At once the child lets out a lusty howl of pain at the summary breaking of his favorite plaything.* BOURRIENNE, *who had become thoroughly frightened at* NAPOLEON'S *unbridled fury, has retreated over left. At the sound of the screaming child* NAPOLEON *looks up at the* BOY, *then at the broken stick remaining in his hand, and then he at once goes up to the terrace to where the* BOY *stands crying and picks the youngster up in his arms. He comes down slowly, meanwhile trying to soothe the child whose sobs gradually grow less.*] Bourrienne—be off!

BOURRIENNE

[*With abject humility.*] Yes—yes, Your Majesty! [*Starts up.*]

NAPOLEON

Bourrienne!

BOURRIENNE

[*Halting.*] Your Majesty will be—merciful? You will give me a chance to—to repay?

NAPOLEON

[*Hugging the child close and intent on stilling his cries.*] Don't bother me! Come to my cabinet—to-morrow night—and you will know what your punishment is to be.

BOURRIENNE

Yes—Your Majesty.

[*Exits quickly up left. There is a short pause during which* NAPOLEON *walks right and left and talks endearingly to the* BOY, *whom he continues to hold in his arms. Then* JOSEPHINE *and* MARIE DUVAL *appear on the terrace right at 2 and look at* NAPOLEON.]

JOSEPHINE

[*Chaffing him.*] His Majesty has added the rôle of nursemaid to his many other accomplishments, I see.

[NAPOLEON *turns and sees the two women, then resumes his pacing back and forth without further evidence that he is aware of their presence. Then* JOSEPHINE *and* MARIE *come down the steps right in 2 while* NAPOLEON, *who is now over left, sits on the marble seat down left and holds the* BOY *on his knee.*]

NAPOLEON

[*Sympathetic.*] Poor little man—I broke his toy, but he shall have another—the very best in France!

JOSEPHINE

Sire, would you allow me to present one whom you will doubtless remember?

[MARIE DUVAL *bows and then* NAPOLEON *takes first notice of her face.*]

NAPOLEON

Ah, yes-yes-yes—the little, the lit-tle?—Duval girl, governess of the children, only grown more beautiful.

MARIE DUVAL

I am greatly honored that His Majesty should remember one from—the long ago!

NAPOLEON

Long ago?—tut, tut—ten years is not long. We have made a [TALLEYRAND *enters right in 2*] new world for you, my dear, in ten years! Well, well—here is a minister who *is* my minister. Come along, Talleyrand. As usual, you are just in time to fall into the arms of a remarkably pretty woman. [*Indicating* MARIE.]

TALLEYRAND

Ah, pretty women!—Would that we could always fall into their arms instead of—their hands! [*Looks at* BOY.] Is this the small child which I heard screaming so wildly a moment ago?

NAPOLEON

Yes, I—I broke his horse and now he can't ride home. But we'll give him the money to buy another one. [*Searches in his pockets, but finds he has no money.*] Talleyrand, lend me a few Napoleons, please.

[TALLEYRAND *also searches fruitlessly.*]

TALLEYRAND

[*Testily.*] I never have money when I want it most.

NAPOLEON

Josephine, some money for the child!

JOSEPHINE

But Your Majesty knows I never have any money.

NAPOLEON

Never have any? You *have* enough, but God knows you never *keep* any. Does this mean that the treasury of France is empty?

MARIE

If your Majesty would accept it from me—I—I think I have money. [*Searches for it and produces it.*] But not a few Napoleons—that would be almost a fortune to me in these times.

NAPOLEON

Isn't that always the way, Talleyrand, the poor invariably have what the rich want? Thank you, my dear, this will be a good investment for you. There! Now we shall have a new horse and a fine one. [*Offers the money to the child, but the* BOY *is shy.* NAPOLEON *finally opens one small hand and presses the money in it.*] Be sure and buy a big, strong horse and give the rest to mother—

yes? [*The* Boy *nods his head "yes."*] That's a good boy. Now tell me where you live. [*Pause.*] What is your name? [*Pause.*]

MARIE

Oh, *I* know what's the matter with him—he hasn't any tongue—he can't talk!

[*The* Boy *sticks his tongue way out and all laugh.*]

NAPOLEON

That was very clever, Marie. You must care for children to understand them so well.

MARIE

Do I? Why, of course! Doesn't *every* woman?

NAPOLEON

[*Hugging the child.*] No—not every woman.

JOSEPHINE

[*Pouting.*] But you no longer care for my children?

NAPOLEON

That is because they are no longer children. When children grow up to be like their parents, they cease to be interesting—like their parents! But, no child of *mine* could become uninteresting.

JOSEPHINE

[*Harshly.*] Well, save yourself any uneasiness on that score. You shall never worry about *that!*

NAPOLEON

But I *do* worry.

TALLEYRAND

[*With meaning.*] Yes, and many millions more in the country are worrying about it.

JOSEPHINE

[*With a show of temper.*] Bah!—— [*Snaps her fingers.*] That for their worries!

MARIE

[*Becoming alarmed at the change of things.*] I—I think I had better—be going, if Your Majesty will permit it!

JOSEPHINE

Marie has come for a private audience with you, Sire.

NAPOLEON

Very well, Marie—state it. You know all of us well—we are your friends.

MARIE

Yes—I know—but, but I should prefer a moment or two with you alone. It is,—it is very personal, Your Majesty.

NAPOLEON

Oh, very well. First we'll send this young general of cavalry home, then we'll get rid of [*laughs*] the infamous Talleyrand, as the English say, and then we shall have our little chat here all alone—yes?

[*He puts the* BOY *down and rises.*]

MARIE

Oh, Sire, you are much too kind to me.

NAPOLEON

[*To the* BOY.] And now, sir—do you know where you live? [*The* BOY *shakes his head "yes."*] All right—then run along home. [*The* BOY *does not move.*] What's the matter—do you want something else? [*Shakes his head "yes" again.*] Well, what is it? [MARIE *whispers to* NAPOLEON, *who starts for the* BOY. *The* BOY *reaches up his arms to* NAPOLEON *who quickly stoops down, raises him and kisses him several times in a burst of affection. Then he releases him and the* BOY *runs up steps center and off stage right.* MARIE *and* JOSEPHINE *exit right in 2.*] Talleyrand, I never won a greater victory than that!

TALLEYRAND

I fancy you have won victories which have cost you more.

NAPOLEON

Well, what is the news to-day?

TALLEYRAND

There is no news which France wants to hear except —that you have a son!

NAPOLEON

Yes, yes—I know. Fouché has been here. He, too, has been drumming it into my ears. It's plain. I cannot afford to ignore the demands of the people any longer.

TALLEYRAND

Without a son—another reign of terror!

NAPOLEON

Yes, without a son the beginning is the end! You have said it—the nation is saying it—I *must* be a father!

TALLEYRAND

I am glad you have made up your mind, Sire. Why, it was only yesterday that Madame de Stael said that your subjects were beginning to think that you were not —so much of a man after all!

NAPOLEON

[*Annoyed.*] Bah!—that de Stael woman has never forgiven me for what I said to her when she asked me who was the greatest woman. She expected me to bow very low and thus indicate *her* as the greatest woman.

TALLEYRAND

What did you say, Sire?

NAPOLEON

I told her the greatest woman is the one who has— borne the greatest number of sons!

TALLEYRAND

Ah, I see—because sons, of course, mean soldiers?

NAPOLEON

No! Because sons mean—something to—love!

TALLEYRAND

Then that sort of love for you is a remote possibility!

NAPOLEON

No, it is not! I have made up my mind to——

[JOSEPHINE *enters right in 2 and stands at the head of the steps.*]

JOSEPHINE

[*Crankily.*] Have you forgotten that you are to see Marie privately?

NAPOLEON

[*Impatiently.*] No, I have not! [*She comes down to the foot of the steps and* NAPOLEON *crosses to her.* TALLEYRAND *walks up left discreetly, leaving them to converse in low tones.*] Why are you always interrupting these conferences with my ministers?

JOSEPHINE

[*Loftily.*] I am interested—I am the Empress—I have a right to know.

NAPOLEON

You have one right which you seldom take—the right to mind your own business! Now let us alone!

JOSEPHINE

[*Disagreeably.*] Not until you tell me why you are forever talking in secret with Fouché and Talleyrand.

NAPOLEON

[*Eyeing her coldly.*] Very well, if you must know—they are urging me to pardon—Barras! [*He looks at her a moment keenly as she slowly turns and exits right in 2.* TALLEYRAND *comes down. With conviction.*] Talleyrand, it has taken five thousand years to know a

man's body, but in five million years a woman's mind will still be unknown! That woman drives me half-mad. When she deceives me it is comedy, but when I deceive her then—it is tragedy.

TALLEYRAND

When the Empress interrupted us you had just said that you had made up your mind—to what?

NAPOLEON

Yes, and I have! I have decided to—well, Josephine has failed me!

TALLEYRAND

[*Glad surprise.*] You mean—you will divorce her?

NAPOLEON

Yes—it is the only way. I owe it to the nation, to the people, but—most of all—I owe it to myself.

TALLEYRAND

Even though we have all urged this step strongly, Your Majesty must proceed with caution. The people are the real masters—and you know many of your people do not realize the true situation—they still believe Josephine a good wife. You see, the people think a good wife is like ivy—the greater the ruin the closer she clings!

NAPOLEON

[*Harshly.*] Yes, and a bad wife is like ivy—the closer she clings the greater the ruin! Only one thing bothers me—how to make the divorce legitimate.

TALLEYRAND

Oh, we'll make the divorce legal—if not legitimate!

NAPOLEON

Very well—then my duty is plain. I want a son!

TALLEYRAND

Yes, I suppose you do, but—how do you know you can have one?

NAPOLEON

[*Pausing as though just struck with this thought for the first time.*] Talleyrand, say that again!

TALLEYRAND

I said—How do you know you can have a child? Nature has decreed that some men shall not be fathers. It may be that it is impossible for you to have issue. Do you—*know?*

NAPOLEON

[*Impetuously.*] *Know!*—Do I know? Of course I know, that is, I have not *proved* it, but I know. All the Bonapartes have had children. I am still a young man. My greatest desire is to be a father—fatherhood is in every bit of my being. Do you suppose that the Almighty placed me on earth to rule the universe, *as I shall*—unless He intended to give me a son?

TALLEYRAND

The Almighty *never* gave any man everything he wanted!

NAPOLEON

And I tell you that the Almighty never left any great plan incomplete.

TALLEYRAND

This talk is all futile, at lease, all talk of a divorce is premature until you have—you said the only word a moment ago—*proof*—that's what is wanted now—*proof* that you *can* have a child!

NAPOLEON

Then prove it I will! Conquest has made me what I am—conquest alone can keep me where I am. I have conquered hearts as well as countries, and—I always find what I want! Yes, my mind is made up. [*Short pause.*] I am trying to think of the type of woman which would please me best. I wonder if——

[JOSEPHINE *and* MARIE *enter right in 2 and stand at the head of the steps there.*]

JOSEPHINE

[*Explaining, but defiant.*] Your Majesty will pardon us, but the matter which Marie wishes to see you about is most urgent—she has risked your displeasure because she must address you at once.

[TALLEYRAND *and* NAPOLEON *are now over left.*]

NAPOLEON

Oh, very well, I'll see her.

[*As* JOSEPHINE *and* MARIE *start down the steps right,* TALLEYRAND *nudges* NAPOLEON, *indicates the approaching* MARIE *by a gesture and speaks.*]

TALLEYRAND

[*Sotto voce.*] That pretty Duval woman—isn't *she* splendid looking?

MARIE

[*Crossing left.*] Your Majesty will not be angry because I——

NAPOLEON

[*Staring at her.*] Angry?—no, no! We had quite finished, Talleyrand and I.

TALLEYRAND

And I was due at the War Office long ago. So I *must* start now.

JOSEPHINE

Then M. Talleyrand will be good enough to accompany me a little way?

[TALLEYRAND *bows to her and both start up.*]

NAPOLEON

I say, Prince, one does not often see the fox and the dove walking together in peace. [*All laugh and* JOSEPHINE *and* TALLEYRAND *exit up left along the terrace.* NAPOLEON *motions for* MARIE *to sit down right. She*

crosses R., *and then hesitates.*] Be seated, Marie, yes, yes,—sit down. It is your Emperor who commands you, but—your friend who asks you. [*She sits on bench down right.*] And now what momentous event is about to tear your young life to shreds?

[*He speaks lightly, but eyes her keenly.*]

MARIE

I have come to you to plead for the man I love—to implore your mercy and to pray that you will give him to me. He has been in prison for two years. He has done no wrong and he——

NAPOLEON

Who is the man?

MARIE

Monsieur Barras.

NAPOLEON

[*In sudden rage.*] Barras!

MARIE

[*Recoiling in fright.*] Oh, Sire—your anger frightens me. [*Pause.*]

NAPOLEON

[*Holding his fury in check.*] And the Empress Josephine sent you to intercede for him, eh?

MARIE

[*Surprised.*] The Empress Josephine?

NAPOLEON

[*Ugly.*] Yes—didn't she? Answer me!

MARIE

[*Bewildered.*] Why, no, Your Majesty. Why should she? It is *I* who love him!

NAPOLEON

[*Unbelieving.*] But the Empress brought you—here!

MARIE

Oh, no, Sire—it was Monsieur Fouché.

NAPOLEON

Hah!—Fouché, always Fouché! How came Fouché to bring you?

MARIE

I asked him to, Sire. [*Pause.*]

NAPOLEON

You say you have loved Barras over ten years!

MARIE

Yes, Your Majesty, ten years and I—shall always,—love him.

NAPOLEON

[*Bluntly.*] Are you his mistress?

MARIE

[*Rising in horror.*] Sire! I said I *loved* him!

NAPOLEON

Yes, I heard you, but there are many kinds of love.

MARIE

I only know one kind—honest love!

NAPOLEON

All love is honest—it is the lovers who are dishonest. If your affection for each other is so—holy—why have you not married?

MARIE

I could not leave my mother while she lived. When M. Barras returned after her death he was put in prison. Oh, Your Majesty, have pity! He suffers and I can't stand it much longer. We will leave the country and never return. We want nothing but each other.

NAPOLEON

[*Walks back and forth bitterly.*] Nothing but each other!

MARIE

Oh, Sire, why do you hate Monsieur Barras so?

NAPOLEON

[*Laughs sardonically.*] Why do I hate Monsieur Barras!

MARIE

Yes—there must be some reason for it. Has he ever done you any wrong? [NAPOLEON *laughs again.*]

NAPOLEON

Has he? And you believe in him in spite of all the trouble he has caused you?

MARIE

Trouble? Ah, yes! Trouble is just the alloy in the gold of love which makes love last longer. Don't you believe that a pure, platonic love like ours is possible?

NAPOLEON

[*Sarcastic.*] As possible as a—mental liaison! Only two kinds of people are virtuous—those who control every desire, or those who never have one. Barras is neither. [*Short pause.*] Marie, you love children, I believe you said?

MARIE

Yes, Sire, I do, but—but it is for Monsieur Barras I am here—not to talk about children, Your Majesty. Why are you so hard? Surely Your Majesty remembers the days before fortune smiled upon you—when M. Barras and I were your friends and we were all happy?

NAPOLEON

Yes, I remember those days and I also remember—Barras!

MARIE

Then forgive him—let him start life anew somewhere else—let *me* be happy, Sire. I have waited long for it!

NAPOLEON

[*With an air of finality.*] No—I am sorry, but—it is now too late. [*Pause.*]

MARIE

[*Terribly frightened.*] You—you mean? [*Rises.*]

NAPOLEON

That your appeal was not soon enough. Barras—must die!

MARIE

[*Stricken.*] Die? Oh, Mon Dieu!—doomed to die? [*Suddenly falls on her knees before him and grasps his clothes in agonized fear.*] Monsieur Bonaparte, this is *my* man—the *only* man in the world—forget that you are Napoleon—put yourself in my place. His life is nothing to you—oh, *give him to me!*

[*She sobs in heart-broken anguish as* NAPOLEON *raises her and leads her to the seat down right, where he sits beside her and soothes her.*]

NAPOLEON

[*Rather tenderly.*] This—this Barras is very dear to you—is he not?

MARIE

Is he dear to me? Dearer than my very life!

NAPOLEON

[*Fixedly.*] Then you would give yourself for him, would you?

MARIE

Would I? God! My hands—my eyes—everything! Bind me to a cannon and shoot me into the sea. Would I give my life for him? [*Laughs hysterically.*]

NAPOLEON

[*Intensely.*] I did not ask you if you would give your *life* to save him!

MARIE

[*Startled.*] Not give my life? What else would I give? What did you say? I don't understand, Sire!

NAPOLEON

I asked you if you would give—*yourself*—to save his life. [*Pause.*]

MARIE

[*Points to self.*] My—myself——?

NAPOLEON

Yes.

MARIE

[*Recoils.*] Oh! [*Pause.*] *Who* is the *man?*

NAPOLEON

I am!

MARIE

[*Strained voice.*] Yes—I needn't have asked that. Your manner—your eyes—should have told me. [*Pause.*] I wonder—— [*Stands suddenly.*] Ah, that's it! You hate him so—you would first defile the woman he loves—for a more terrible revenge—before you—kill him! No man who puts that alternative to a woman is to be trusted. You would not keep your word. I don't believe you—I *don't* believe you!

NAPOLEON

I am not lying—if you make the bargain with me I will keep it if—*you* do.

MARIE

But why—why do you want me? There are ten thousand other women in France who are yours for the asking,—all of birth and charm and—I—*I* am nobody!

NAPOLEON

Never mind why—it is you I want. Come, make your choice. Will you save Barras?

MARIE

Is there no mercy in you? Is there no other way?

NAPOLEON

[*Grimly.*] There is no other way! [*Pause.*]

MARIE

[*Controlling herself.*] Let me—I must understand it —fully. How long am I to be yours?

NAPOLEON

For one year you will belong to me and to me—alone.

MARIE

One year? Three hundred and sixty-five days! For me—three hundred and sixty-five deaths! [*Beats her hands together.*] Well, after the year—what then—yes—what then?

NAPOLEON

Oh, after the year you will be—free.

MARIE

Free! Mon Dieu! Free! Ha, ha, ha! Very well—[*Pause.*] I'll do it, but *you* must do this—first! Sign an order for his immediate release, make out his pardon, and place both of the papers in my possession. I don't—trust you!

NAPOLEON

As you wish. Both papers will be in your hands to-morrow.

[JOSEPHINE *enters up right along the terrace.*]

JOSEPHINE

Your Majesty, I am sorry to interfere, but it is the hour for your dejeunier. [*Crosses left.*]

NAPOLEON

[*Hurried to* MARIE.] Fouché will bring you to my private cabinet—to-morrow night. [MARIE *starts up.*] We had quite finished, my *dear* Josephine.

[MARIE *bows to* JOSEPHINE *and exits quickly left in 2.* JOSEPHINE *comes down center to where* NAPOLEON *stands looking off left in 2 after* MARIE.]

JOSEPHINE

[*Rather scornfully.*] The onerous duties of an Emperor seemed to be confined to-day to a mongrel ragmuffin and a pretty woman.

NAPOLEON

[*Turning, and with studied meaning.*] You are right —to a woman *who* was pretty and a—child!

JOSEPHINE

[*With quick anger.*] Why are you always taunting me with that? Child, child, *child!* It is all I hear from morning till night. You cannot place the blame on me. It is not my fault!

NAPOLEON

No?

JOSEPHINE

No—I *have* children.

NAPOLEON

Which proves nothing except that—you *have* had them!

JOSEPHINE

[*Laughs shrilly.*] You would make yourself believe the impossible. Very soon you will really believe you are virtuous!

NAPOLEON

Why *should* a man be virtuous? Nobody believes it of him. Conquests are too easy!

JOSEPHINE

Well, there's one place you'll never conquer—purgatory!

NAPOLEON

Purgatory—bah! Purgatory comes to a man at the age of dead desires—to woman with old age. You are nearer to it than I am.

JOSEPHINE

Twit me on my age if you want to, but I'm too old to be fooled by you. What did Marie Duval want?

NAPOLEON

Don't you know?

JOSEPHINE

How should I know? She asked me if I could arrange an audience with you for her, as it was a matter of vital importance. I did so. Now you know all.

NAPOLEON

Yes—do I know all?

JOSEPHINE

Yes—you know all—you always do—while I—I know nothing. You hide everything from me, but I'll stand it no longer. What did you say to her? She was shaken with some great emotion when she left. Did you refuse her request?

NAPOLEON

[*Quickly.*] Ah—request? Then you do know she wanted something?

JOSEPHINE

Of course she did, else she would not have come to you. What is the matter with you? What are you hinting at?

NAPOLEON

Nothing. Mon Dieu! Is there *no* satisfying you? First you demand to know secrets of State, and then, in every word I say, you imagine I am inferring something against you. You would try the patience of all the saints!

[*They glare at each other in silence for an instant. Then she asks in a savage voice:*]

JOSEPHINE

Are you going to tell me what you said to that Duval woman?

NAPOLEON

No—it is none of your business.

JOSEPHINE

[*Exasperated.*] Bonaparte, didn't the marriage ceremony bind us together? Doesn't it mean that——

NAPOLEON

[*Breaking in.*] Binds! Yes, the marriage ceremony binds together those who do *not* love!

JOSEPHINE

You will suffer for ridiculing God's holiest contract. It would serve you right if He did not favor you in your next war!

NAPOLEON

[*Laughs.*] Pah—God always favors the heaviest battalions!

JOSEPHINE

[*Suddenly beside herself with rage.*] Oh, you monster without a heart, without a conscience or a soul! You are fooling everybody but me—but *I* know that Fame is making a great man out of a—scoundrel! Before long the people will find out what is behind that mask you wear. [*She goes up steps left in 2 and pauses at the top.* NAPOLEON *is walking away from her when she begins this tirade and now he stops and faces her, standing a little over right.*] The people love me and they are beginning to find out how you are continually humiliating and [*voice rises to a scream here*] *deceiving* me! I'll find out what you are hiding from me in your talks with Fouché and Talleyrand and I'll find out what you said to that Duval woman. I'll submit no longer to your indifference and your insults! I'm not afraid of you—I defy you—I hate you!

[*She pauses all out of breath.* NAPOLEON *has stood motionless during her wild, vindictive speech, and now he hesitates before answering.*]

NAPOLEON

You're a ninny—go stick to your needle!

[JOSEPHINE *exits left in 2, sobbing hysterically.* NAPOLEON *stands an instant, humming a song lightly, and then looks off up right as though hearing something. Then he walks up, still looking off right. Suddenly into view comes the* LITTLE BOY *astride a new and expensive toy horse. He laughs when he sees* NAPOLEON, *who goes up the steps center and picks the* BOY *up in his arms, toy and all. He exits right carrying the* BOY, *who laughs loudly as they exit.*]

CURTAIN

THE THIRD ACT

THE THIRD ACT

PRIVATE CABINET OF NAPOLEON

SCENE: *Interior boxed in 3. An apartment of royal magnificence. An entrance left in 2, and another entrance left in 3. Between these two entrances is a large fire-place with an appropriate clock and suitable bric-a-brac on the mantel. There is an entrance right in 3 and an entrance center which is kept from view by the hanging tapestry. Down right a large table used as a desk, and a chair at right of the table which faces left. On desk are books, papers and a vase of flowers. Down left a small, low couch used for a lounge or resting. Heavy chairs up left and right. The walls of the room are hung in deep purple and about the room, and on the furnishings of the chairs is the well-known "N." The carpet is of the same hue as the upholstery, walls, etc., all harmonizing into a whole of regal luxuriance. The room is lighted according to the prevailing method of the period. At the curtain the stage is empty. After a short pause the Mameluke,* ROUSTAN, *enters quietly left in 3 and silently stands a moment while he sur-*

veys the opposite entrance, right in 3. Then he crosses right to the table and arranges the chair, etc. A knock sounds on the door left in 3 and ROUSTAN *crosses left to the door left in 3 and opens it.* BOURRIENNE *enters and comes down.*

BOURRIENNE

[*In trepidation—half whisper.*] The Emperor, Roustan, where is he?

ROUSTAN

[*Indicating doorway right in 3.*] In his bedchamber. He spoke of you not long ago. He said he remembered that you were to come at this hour. He has not forgotten.

BOURRIENNE

[*Nervously.*] Forgotten? Mon Dieu—he forgets nothing—nothing!

[*Walks about and shows suppressed emotion.*]

ROUSTAN

Monsieur is unhappy—frightened about something! I am sorry. Perhaps I could help!

BOURRIENNE

[*Quite unstrung.*] I am in great trouble, Roustan, and I face much suffering of mind and body. My life has turned upside down—I'm sick of the world!

ROUSTAN

[*Simply.*] Then it must be your heart, Monsieur, for the world is only in our hearts.

BOURRIENNE

Yes, sometimes we lose our hearts and then—then our world is gone. Fool, fool, that I was not to understand Bonaparte better. Roustan [*wildly*], I shall be banished from the country, perhaps imprisoned. He said that ingratitude was the unpardonable sin—he who forgets

nothing—who forgives his enemies, but never his friends. Tell me, Roustan, is he—is he in a good humor this evening—has the Empress annoyed him to-day?

[*As* BOURRIENNE *puts the question there is heard the* EMPEROR'S *voice off stage right as it breaks lightly into song. They pause while he finishes a verse of a love song.*]

ROUSTAN

[*Smiling.*] You hear—Monsieur may judge for himself.

BOURRIENNE

[*Fearfully.*] It means nothing for him to sing—nothing! During the Italian campaign when he was contemplating the annihilation of his foes—he often sang.

ROUSTAN

Ah, Monsieur, but I have heard him sing when he was only kind and merciful.

BOURRIENNE

[*Absent-minded.*] When was that?

ROUSTAN

In Egypt. You remember the battle of the Nile—when the fight with my people was only target practice for the French? When the Nile itself was damned with dead Mamelukes? The next day the French soldiers fished for dead Mamelukes for the jewelry on their bodies. Some of the Mamelukes were hardly dead. It was cheaper then to kill a wounded soldier than to make him well and so—when they fished me out, one of the wounded—he would not let them dispatch me!

BOURRIENNE

[*Interested.*] *Who* wouldn't let them?

ROUSTAN

The Emperor. He looked at me and then [*pause*] I heard him humming a song! He gave me my life—it

belongs to him—that is why I am here. To me, his song is the voice of Allah. Do not be afraid, Monsieur, he will forgive you. I can tell!

[*Again the voice of* NAPOLEON *is heard in song for a moment and then the* EMPEROR *enters right in 3, lowering his voice somewhat as he enters. He pauses an instant as he sees* BOURRIENNE *and smiles.* BOURRIENNE *is visibly shaken.*]

NAPOLEON

[*Most amiable.*] Ah, Bourrienne, you are here, I see!

BOURRIENNE

[*Cringing.*] You so directed me, Sire.

NAPOLEON

[*Turns to table right and handles paper there a moment.*] Yes, yes—of course. [*Again hums a tune.*] Pardons, pardons, pardons. [*Dropping papers on the table one by one.*] That clever Talleyrand says it will be well for France if I never break the laws in any other way except to unlawfully issue pardons. Ha, ha! [*Laughs musingly. Turns and notices* ROUSTAN.] That's all, Roustan.

ROUSTAN

[*Crosses left and pauses at the entrance left.*] Your Majesty does not wish to be disturbed by *anyone* tonight?

NAPOLEON

[*Intense.*] Admit absolutely *nobody,* Roustan, except the *one* I told you about and those two ex-priests!

[*Pause.*]

ROUSTAN

I am very stupid, Your Majesty, but I do not understand.

NAPOLEON

[*Laughing.*] Hah, that's so—you wouldn't. Admit only Messieurs Talleyrand and Fouché. [ROUSTAN *bows*

and exits left in 3.] It is very amusing, Bourrienne, to note how suspicious Talleyrand and Fouché are of each other and how they despise one another. Fouché says, to get anything out of Talleyrand you have to fill him to the neck with money and Talleyrand says that Fouché would take a contract to assassinate the whole French nation at one louis a head. [*Laughs heartily.*]

BOURRIENNE

[*Puzzled by* NAPOLEON'S *mood.*] I wonder Your Majesty depends so much on them?

NAPOLEON

[*Snaps his fingers.*] Depend on them—Pah!—I depend on—myself! They would both betray me—if—they—dared! But should they—well, I shall know what to do—be sure of that! And here is advice for you—no matter what you want to do—*always* have the alternative ready. If you knew this when you were tempted in Belgium to rob France!—you would have—done something else!

BOURRIENNE

[*Imploringly.*] Have mercy on me, Your Majesty! The million francs I have taken I cannot possibly replace, now, but if you will only give me a little time I——

NAPOLEON

[*Preoccupied and breaking in.*] I wonder if you remember that pretty little governess at the home of Madame de Beauharnais when we all used to meet there—her name was—Marie Duval?

BOURRIENNE

[*Nonplused at the sudden turn in the conversation.*] Er—oh—Marie Duval? Why, yes, I remember her, Your Majesty—she, she was quite pretty, but I [*hastily*]—was speaking about the million francs, Your Majesty. If you will only give me time——

NAPOLEON

[*Sounding him.*] Then if you remember her, you will recall that she was the mistress of Barras, was she not?

BOURRIENNE

The mistress of Barras—Marie Duval—*his mistress!*

NAPOLEON

[*Impatiently.*] Yes, yes—his *mistress!*

BOURRIENNE

Oh, no, Your Majesty—not she—she was a *good* girl. Oh, no, it was not *she* who was his mistress—*then!*

NAPOLEON

[*In a quick rage.*] What do you mean by answering like that—it was not *she* who was his mistress—*then?*

BOURRIENNE

[*Frightened again.*] Why, nothing, nothing, Sire. Only there were several mistresses of Barras then and she was not one.

NAPOLEON

[*Searchingly.*] Are you sure?

BOURRIENNE

Positive! She lived purely—she thought purely.

NAPOLEON

[*Smiling.*] That is good news, Bourrienne—it pleases me very much.

BOURRIENNE

[*Terribly upset.*] Your Majesty, I beg of you, tell me what my punishment is to be and have it over with. I cannot stand this suspense.

NAPOLEON

[*Lightly.*] Oh, tut, tut! I have other things of more importance to consider. How do you think I am looking, Bourrienne?

[*Turns himself all around.*]

BOURRIENNE

[*All at sea.*] Very—very well, Your Majesty.

NAPOLEON

[*Looking himself over.*] Don't show my age much, eh? Figure and color good. A little hair gone—that's all?

BOURRIENNE

I should say, Sire, you are looking more vigorous and younger than ever.

NAPOLEON

[*Pleased, pinches* BOURRIENNE'S *cheek.*] Ah, Bourrienne, you still carry that deadly poison—flattery!

BOURRIENNE

[*Very earnestly.*] It is the truth, I swear it! Why, your mental and physical strength is the wonder of Europe.

NAPOLEON

[*Walking about with half a strut.*] Yes, I guess you are right, Bourrienne. Anyway, I feel it—I feel that my *real* greatness is still ahead of me. Why not? Alexander had the known world in his hands when he was only thirty-three. Well, I am not yet forty! [*Opens his hands and shrugs his shoulders.*] So you think I'm looking well, do you, Bourrienne?

[*Smoothes a wrinkle from his clothes here and there.*]

BOURRIENNE

[*Beginning to see a light.*] Oh, Sire—no dandy could be more perfectly appointed. I'm sure—*sure*—the ladies would find you irresistible.

NAPOLEON

[*Complacently.*] Ahem! Well, I certainly never felt younger than I do this moment.

[*Walks about and hums a song.*]

BOURRIENNE

[*Thinking the time ripe.*] Then Your Majesty will give me time to repay the—the——

NAPOLEON

[*Breaking in abruptly.*] Time—time?—What time is it?

BOURRIENNE

[*Sticking to it.*] A little before nine o'clock. Your Majesty will give me time—that's all I ask.

NAPOLEON

[*Impatiently.*] Is *that* all! Not yet nine! Mon Dieu —there is nothing as fast and nothing as slow, as time. What was it you asked, Bourrienne?

BOURRIENNE

[*Suavely.*] My—my indiscreet acts in Belgium—the million francs.

NAPOLEON

[*Nonchalantly.*] Oh, well—I'll straighten the matter for you from my private funds and we'll—we'll discuss the details of my reimbursement later. This room is frightfully warm.

[*Fans himself vigorously.*]

BOURRIENNE

[*Dropping on one knee in abject humility.*] Sire, I am overcome—if you would only command me to do something at this moment of extreme peril—whereby my life would be forfeited!

NAPOLEON

[*Reflectively.*] All right. I'll test your loyalty and devotion.

BOURRIENNE

[*Bravely.*] At this instant I am anxious to die for you!

NAPOLEON

[*Again preoccupied.*] Then—then—see who is awaiting an audience. [BOURRIENNE *is very bored, but rises and crosses left to entrance left in 3. He opens the door and looks out, after which he closes it and turns to* NAPOLEON. *Shakes head yes.*] Ah! There *is* someone—I will see her now! You must go at once!

BOURRIENNE

'Tis not a lady—only Talleyrand, Your Majesty.

NAPOLEON

[*Annoyed.*] The devil!—That man of many masks. I must get rid of him quickly. [*Gestures toward door left in 3.* BOURRIENNE *opens it, bows off very low, stands aside and* TALLEYRAND *enters. Then* BOURRIENNE *closes the door.* TALLEYRAND *comes down slowly.*] Ah, mon Prince. [*In rather exaggerated welcome.*] Am I "Your Majesty" to-night or—"the Corsican brigand?" [TALLEYRAND *forces laugh.*] You keep late hours in your affairs of state?

TALLEYRAND

If many men did not work a few women could not play!

NAPOLEON

And if women did not play men would have no incentive for work—so there you are!

BOURRIENNE

Your Majesty——?

NAPOLEON

Ah, yes, Bourrienne—you are leaving—au revoir!

[BOURRIENNE *exits left in 3.*]

TALLEYRAND

[*Down* C.] What are you going to do with him?

[*Meaning* BOURRIENNE.]

NAPOLEON

[*At table right.*] He has arranged to pay back the money——

TALLEYRAND

[*Dryly.*] H'm—he is lucky—very lucky.

NAPOLEON

Lucky? No such thing as luck. Good luck is what is written—bad luck is bad judgment.

TALLEYRAND

Yes, and the bark of a dog might have cost you many a battle! No such thing as luck, eh?

NAPOLEON

[*Pushing away papers nervously.*] Ah, well—it's not worth an argument, anyway. What special errand brought you this evening, Prince?

TALLEYRAND

Do you realize that the nation is in a ferment over just one thing?

NAPOLEON

[*Lightly.*] Oh, dear! *What* is it now?

TALLEYRAND

Your Majesty should remember. We discussed it yesterday. I refer to the matter of the—succession!

NAPOLEON

Oh, that! [*Beaming on him.*] Have no further worry over that. As you diplomats say—negotiations have begun.

TALLEYRAND

It will mean something—when you hold a king in your arms.

NAPOLEON

It will mean more when I hold a *son* in my arms. Let him be king or pauper as long as he is mine. [*With great feeling.*] I tell you, Talleyrand, man has no surer hope

of the hereafter than which is shown to him through his children. [*Very nervous. Rises and walks up and then back again to seat at desk.*] If this matter is not settled definitely I'll—I'll break out into war with somebody.

TALLEYRAND

H'm—before we talk war let us consider the church.

NAPOLEON

[*Testily.*] What about the church?

TALLEYRAND

[*Warningly.*] The delegation from Rome—they are still here—they desire something definite before they leave in the morning.

NAPOLEON

[*Decisively.*] Ah, very well, tell them this! They want too many days for festivals. The savior of France is to be—labor! Too many play days make too many hungry mouths. I will give them four holidays throughout the year, but—no more! If the gentlemen from Rome do not like this they may—take nothing!

TALLEYRAND

[*Quizzically.*] Sire, you are risking your soul!

NAPOLEON

[*Impatiently.*] My soul—bah! The perpetuity of my name during the memory of man is worth more to me than the immortality of my soul. What else is there?

TALLEYRAND

It is imperative that we pay immediate attention to the navy.

NAPOLEON

[*Peeved.*] Why bring these matters up to-night, of all nights? The navy! Pah—the navy! When I get ready to invade and take England *I'll* build one which shall accomplish my object!

TALLEYRAND

There are other uses for a navy. Have you forgotten Trafalgar and Nelson?

NAPOLEON

[*Petulantly.*] Auh! I have good reason to remember Trafalgar, but it happened when I was in Bavaria. I suppose you know I couldn't be *everywhere!*

TALLEYRAND

[*Sighing.*] Yes, it is too bad you could not have been at Trafalgar. No doubt you would have inspired great confidence—galloping from ship to ship!

NAPOLEON

[*Admiringly.*] Talleyrand, you dare much when you dare to ridicule me to my face. Hah, Talleyrand, I like men of strong passions and great weaknesses—that is why I like you!—why I like most diplomats. But—should you not return to the delegation from Rome? They are waiting for you?

TALLEYRAND

[*Easily.*] Oh, plenty of time! [NAPOLEON *shows exasperation.*] Speaking of diplomats. Sire, you should not pay much attention to what a diplomat says. Diplomacy is saying one thing and doing another.

[NAPOLEON *takes knife from desk and vigorously whittles the arms of his chair while* TALLEYRAND *talks.*]

TALLEYRAND

[*Continuing.*] Next to the birth of the son of Napoleon in interest comes the news of the death of the King of England. Speculators are crazy to get the first news of either hoped-for event. This afternoon a speculator asked me if the report about the death of the King of England were true. I said to him: "Some say he is and others say he is not, but for my part I believe neither

the one report nor the other. I tell you this in strict confidence so, for heaven's sake, do not betray me!" He said he would not tell and thanked me for the information.

NAPOLEON

[*Laughs in a vexed way and asks maliciously.*] And, speaking of speculations, Talleyrand, reminds me that I'm curious to know how you ever managed to amass your fortune of 30,000,000 francs as minister of foreign affairs and on your very small salary!

TALLEYRAND

[*Mockingly.*] That is easily explained. I bought stocks the day you blew that whiff of grape—remember? —and sold them the next day. Then—I *had* it!

NAPOLEON

[*Dryly.*] Yes—simple—exceedingly simple! Financiers only make money when the nation is rickety! I suppose, mon Prince, the ability to make money is heaven-born—that it is inherited like—the nose on your face? You are proud of your ancestry—you have much to thank it for, eh?

TALLEYRAND

[*Proudly.*] I am the result of a great ancestry, Sire.

NAPOLEON

[*Heatedly.*] The idea of ancestry is all wrong. Ancestors are made, not born! Ancestors are the glory of some great achievement, not of birth. Talleyrand, you are a descendent, but I—am an ancestor!

TALLEYRAND

[*Amused.*] Oh, no, Your Majesty—at least you are not—so far as we *know!*

NAPOLEON

Talleyrand, there seems to be no getting ahead of your nimble wit and ready tongue. You are right, I am not yet an ancestor, but—I *will* be!

TALLEYRAND

[*Eagerly.*] Oh—then Your Majesty has already—er—made arrangements?

NAPOLEON

[*Getting more exasperated by* TALLEYRAND'S *staying.*] Yes—I did *make* arrangements, but I fear a *blockhead* will *unmake* them.

[*Enter* ROUSTAN *left in 3.*]

ROUSTAN

Your Majesty, Monsieur Fouché is here.

NAPOLEON

[*Pleased—rises.*] Oh, yes—I will see him at once and the—er—person with him.

ROUSTAN

Monsieur Fouché is alone, Your Majesty.

NAPOLEON

[*Sharply.*] What is that—there is *no* one with him?

ROUSTAN

No one, Your Majesty.

NAPOLEON

[*Furious. Bangs book on desk and comes around front of desk.*] Good God!—What is the matter with—everybody? Tell him—tell him to come.

[ROUSTAN *exits left in 3.*]

TALLEYRAND

Your Majesty must not let—little things—bother you.

NAPOLEON

[*Very irritable.*] Little things! Mon Dieu!

[FOUCHÉ *enters left in 3.*]

FOUCHÉ

[*Bowing.*] Your Majesty.

NAPOLEON

I have been expecting you, Fouché. That is why Mon-

sieur Talley has delayed. [TALLEYRAND *and* FOUCHÉ *bow stiffly to each other. To* TALLEYRAND.] Before you hurry away, wait a moment while I get a little remembrance for each of the delegation and also one which they will carry to the Holy Father.

TALLEYRAND

[*With deep sarcasm.*] Ah, something for the—religion of priests?

NAPOLEON

No, Prince, something for the *priests* of religion. There is a vast difference! [*Crosses right to entrance right in 3.*] Be patient—I'll detain you but a moment. Such *old* friends must have much to say to each other! [*Exits right in 3.*]

TALLEYRAND

[*Fishing.*] The Emperor was much annoyed because —because you did not bring your friend with you.

[*Pause.*]

FOUCHÉ

[*At first nonplused—then getting wise.*] My—my friend?

TALLEYRAND

Yes—you were to bring a—lady with you to-night—were you not?

FOUCHÉ

There is a mistake somewhere—I was to bring no woman. Talleyrand, your diplomacy to-night is—muddled!

TALLEYRAND

[*Trying to get him mad.*] Let me tell you that His Majesty's opinion of you is not—muddled!

FOUCHÉ

[*Irritated.*] Bah—*his* opinion!

TALLEYRAND

[*In mock alarm.*] What's this?—Treason, treason! Don't you know that since Napoleon was made, the Almighty has rested?

FOUCHÉ

[*Growls.*] It's too bad the Almighty did not rest sooner!

TALLEYRAND

[*Goading him.*] If you feel that way toward him, why are you *afraid* to give the name of the woman you were to bring here to-night?

FOUCHÉ

[*Apparently nettled.*] Afraid?—Fouché afraid? [*Getting mysterious.*] I'll tell you who it was.

TALLEYRAND

[*Going nearer to him.*] Quickly then—before he returns!

FOUCHÉ

[*With sardonic glee.*] It was—Madame de Stael!

[*Laughs loudly.*]

TALLEYRAND

[*Furious.*] Liar!

[NAPOLEON *enters right in 3 with small boxes in hand.*]

NAPOLEON

I heard your hearty laughter, Fouché. Some more of Talleyrand's incomparable wit, I presume?

TALLEYRAND

[*Spitefully.*] This time he was laughing at his own wit. Fouché is the best audience Fouché has—for—Fouché's wit.

FOUCHÉ

[*Still amused over his dig.*] I related a little bit of scandal about Talleyrand's dearest friend, Madame de Stael, and he—[*Laughing.*]—he could not appreciate it.

NAPOLEON

You never got over your fondness for her, did you, Talleyrand?

TALLEYRAND

[*Evasively.*] Well, Madame de Stael and I, that is, she—she——

NAPOLEON

[*Breaking in.*] There are two words in the language Talleyrand has *never* learned—"yes" and "no." It is now black night outside and yet if I should ask you if the sun were shining, Talleyrand, what would you say?

TALLEYRAND

[*Facetiously.*] I could not honestly say that the sun was *not* shining when I have perpetual sunshine in my heart!

[*Bows and goes up left where he pauses to bow again, then exits left in 3. As soon as the door closes* NAPOLEON *exclaims about his keen disappointment.*]

NAPOLEON

[*Kicking a chair.*] Ay, nom de Dieu! It's always the way—my most careful plans—Phist!—blow to pieces for what?—Nothing at all. In one breath success and in the next failure! I have been waiting—WAITING!—for you to bring the Duval woman and now—— Oh, this bungling makes a man insane—where is she?

[*Pause during which* FOUCHÉ *looks at him calmly.*]

FOUCHÉ

I hope Your Majesty gave me more sense than to bring her here—publicly? I first wished to assure myself that——

NAPOLEON

[*Delighted.*] Ah, then you did *not* fail me, Fouché?

FOUCHÉ

In a few moments I shall have her—by the way of the secret stairway. She will knock—you will open the door—— [*Shrugging his shoulders.*]

NAPOLEON

[*Happily.*] Good! You are always wise, Fouché. No one must know.

FOUCHÉ

It will be well to keep it from your family.

NAPOLEON

[*Lightly.*] Oh, I do not care for them. They all agree with me, all except Joseph. [*Laughing.*] Joseph seems to think if I have a child it will deprive him of his right which should descend from the king, our late father!

FOUCHÉ

And the Empress?

NAPOLEON

[*Grimly.*] What she does not know will not worry her! She is at the opera. However, if she should happen to return unexpectedly—well,—I have locked her door! Now hurry along, Fouché—you can never tell what will happen.

FOUCHÉ

Very well, Your Majesty. [*Starts, then pauses.*] Oh—you have some orders for my department?

NAPOLEON

Yes, I had forgotten. I was looking them over in my chamber. Just a moment—I'll fetch them.

[*Crosses right and exits right in 3. Soon as he disappears* FOUCHÉ *hurries over to the door left in 2 and quickly unlocks the door. Pulls it open to show that it is unlocked, and then carefully closes it.* NAPOLEON *enters right in 3, hands papers to* FOUCHÉ, *who*

goes up and exits left in 3, NAPOLEON *carefully locking the door behind him. Then he slowly surveys the room. The position of vase of flowers on the desk right does not please his eye and he crosses right and moves it a little. He then goes up to the entrance right in 3, opens the door, and looks off, as if critically deciding whether or not his bed-chamber is arranged to suit his fastidious taste. He turns from the doorway with a pleased, satisfactory sigh, and comes down slowly, giving the distinct impression meanwhile that he is listening intently for the knock on the door which* FOUCHÉ *has assured him will be immediately forthcoming. The waiting begins to tell on his nerves and the emotional tension under which he is laboring shows itself in the use of the handkerchief with which he mops his face and forehead, in the way he starts perceptibly once when he has the mistaken belief that he hears the expected knock, and in the peevish manner with which he pushes a chair down right out of his way. As he finally stands stock still down center, gazing off, but with his whole attitude expectantly alert, the clock over left on the mantel, above the fire-place, suddenly strikes sharply. He almost jumps at the first stroke, turns and goes up to entrance right in 3 and exits, only to reappear shortly with a small bottle in hand from which he pours a liquid onto his handkerchief. Then he breathes into the handkerchief as though with relief and rubs his hands with it. The small bottle he replaces on the desk down right and just at this in-*

stant the clock, which strikes very slowly, should about finish the nine strokes.

[*Back he goes to the entrance right in 3 and closes the door carefully, stands and looks across at the door left in 3, and then crosses left to the door left in 3 and tries the handle. Finding it locked, as he expected, he comes down to the entrance left in 2 and reaches out his hand to also try this door in a perfunctory sort of a way, as he knows he locked it earlier in the evening, but, to his great amazement, the door swings open! For an instant he is half-stunned and stands as though transfixed. He cannot account for it! Then he goes to the doorway left in 2 and calls softly:*]

Josephine!

[*Getting no answer, he cries her name sharply, and in a tone of command:*]

Josephine!

[*There is no response and now, convinced that the unlocked door is merely an oversight on his part, he shuts the door and locks it, after which he satisfies himself that it is really locked now. Then without more ado he suddenly smiles, looks up center and after a barely perceptible pause, goes up stage to the hanging tapestry, grasps it and holds it one side, then carefully swings a part of the paneled wall underneath the tapestry, the size of a small door, toward him, disclosing* MARIE DUVAL *standing there leaning against the casing.*

[*She is dressed in white, with a light wrap over her shoulders, and her attitude is limp*

and lifeless—a most pathetic figure. Standing so, and against the dark background, she should make a striking and effective appearance. Quickly taking hold of one of her hands, NAPOLEON *draws her gently within the room, then closes the panel and lets the tapestry fall again into place. Still holding her hand, he drops on one knee and presses her hand to his lips, to which she makes no more response than a dead woman would. Then while* NAPOLEON *is in this position there suddenly comes a loud rap on the door left in 2. There is a pause while* NAPOLEON *listens.* MARIE *makes absolutely no sign that she hears it. The rapping is renewed, this time with more force.* NAPOLEON *rises.* MARIE *leans back against the tapestry up stage and stays there as though a part of the furnishings, unmoving and without emotion.*

[*Now the knocking becomes a furious tattoo, and* JOSEPHINE'S *voice is heard crying loudly:*]

Napoleon!—Let me in!

[*She ends this command with still louder bangings on the door.* NAPOLEON *again draws the tapestry to one side, opens the panel, takes* MARIE *by the hand and leads her into the opening. As* NAPOLEON *starts to close the panel the banging on the door down left in 2 is resumed louder than ever.* NAPOLEON, *having closed the panel, now yanks the tapestry together and turns down stage with his countenance distorted by an expression of almost diabolical hatred. He strides down to the door left in 2 in a man-*

ner which shows that he is almost beside himself with rage, unlocks the door and then leisurely steps back a pace or two to watch JOSEPHINE *as she rushes madly in, gives a searching look about the cabinet, stands and eyes him for a brief instant, then tears over to the door right in 3 which she bangs open and through which she exits. She reappears at once and now crosses slowly toward where* NAPOLEON *is still standing. She halts at stage center.* NAPOLEON *has recovered control of his fury, but inside he is a raging volcano.*]

JOSEPHINE

[*Pointing to door left in 2.*] Why didn't you let me in?

NAPOLEON

There was really no need of it—in another second you would have broken in.

JOSEPHINE

Are you going to answer me—why didn't you let me in?

NAPOLEON

I—I was busy.

JOSEPHINE

Busy? In some things you are always busy! Why did you have the door locked?

NAPOLEON

I have no patience with—curiosity.

JOSEPHINE

[*Hotly.*] I have a right to be curious—I am your wife.

NAPOLEON

My wife! I can truthfully say that I have not forgotten that fact, at least, not as often as you have!

JOSEPHINE

Did I happen to disturb you during one of—your forgetful times? It would seem so—you had the door locked!

NAPOLEON

It would be better for you if you did not have yours so often—*unlocked!*

JOSEPHINE

[*In a rage.*] Oh, I'm sick of all this! [*Moving toward him slowly.*] What have you done with her—where is she?

NAPOLEON

She?—what have I done with *her?*

JOSEPHINE

Yes—*she!* You know whom I mean!

NAPOLEON

Some more of your jealous hallucinations, my dear. You find the door locked—you search the place—you find nobody, and still—where is she?

[*Laughs. Crosses over right slowly.* JOSEPHINE *now down beside couch and in front of it.*]

JOSEPHINE

Your laughter does not deceive me, I can tell you have been up to something. I know you, Napoleon!

NAPOLEON

And I know you—if you knew how much you would be too ashamed to look me in the face again!

JOSEPHINE

[*Derisively.*] Hah—hah! You're a fine one to speak of *shame*—you whose immorality is the court talk of Europe.

NAPOLEON

[*Unmoved at her gibe.*] I repeat—I know you better

than you think. Who told you I was to have some one here to-night?

JOSEPHINE

Who told me? Ah, then you *were* to have somebody here! My—premonition was correct!

NAPOLEON

Premonition—bah! It was not premonition which hurried you here from the opera—it was not premonition which brought you pounding against that door just at the time—— [*Pause.*]

JOSEPHINE

[*Shrilly.*] Just at the time! It was premonition which brought me, I think, just *in* time!

NAPOLEON

[*Ominously calm.*] Yes, in time to interrupt me in——the carrying out of the most important plan I have ever had in mind. I know some one sent you here to—interrupt me, to foil me, to bring me into ridicule. Three people knew. One of the three is in prison and could not tell, one would be too ashamed to tell and the other—it *was* Fouché who told you!

JOSEPHINE

Ha, hah—was it, though?

NAPOLEON

[*Losing his temper.*] Yes, he told you, but he didn't tell you—all! [*Goes up stage center quickly and pulls aside the tapestry, disclosing the panel there.*] He didn't tell you that here is a secret entrance where those who wish to come and go may do so at my pleasure! [*Lets the tapestry fall into place and comes down again.*] And now, let there be no misunderstanding, that secret way will be used whenever I wish.

JOSEPHINE

[*Crazed with jealous rage.*] Beast!—Roue!—I'll poison

you—I'll have you assassinated before you ever succeed once in any such plan!

NAPOLEON

[*Again calm.*] Hush your vile talk. Hear me—for the first and last time. [*Pause.*] I was attracted to you because of the insidious physical fascination which your kind have for all men. That alluring physical charm of yours will always haunt me, but the passions have but a season and there are higher things than the embrace of a woman! I have had very little to do with women, but I know them. You were a fool when you first sought to deceive me, Josephine.

JOSEPHINE

It's a lie—I never did deceive you.

NAPOLEON

Tsst! Lying is not one of your talents. Within forty-eight hours after we were married I was on my way for the Italian campaign and you—you were writing a note to Hypolite Charles! [JOSEPHINE'S *knees give way and she sinks to the couch down left, where she sits and stares fearfully at* NAPOLEON *as he continues.*] Because I never spoke of this before was not because I did not know—because I have never complained of your acts when I was in Egypt or during every other campaign proves—*not* that I was the fool, but—that *you* were! At all times I have refrained from acting just because the washing of a dirty scandal would have been bad policy—it would have delayed my plans of empire, but now—now *nothing* can interfere!

JOSEPHINE

[*Weakly.*] Perhaps not, but—but we shall see!

NAPOLEON

Yes, *you* will see—you will see that I am revenged on that dog of a—Barras! [*She gazes at him an instant, then falls face down on the couch.*] Who first called you

to my attention?—Barras! Who was it first suggested my marrying you?—Barras! Who dangled before me the bait of second in command,—when I could have been first if I had tried?—Barras! Who was it who was tired of you and who wished to get rid of you?—Barras! Who was it cast you off on to me?—Barras! [*Pause, while* JOSEPHINE *moans and shows great emotion.*] So I married you! And what have I ever had from you which I could not get from any woman of shallow passion in the street? From you I have had no sympathy, no loyalty, no home life and—you have borne me no children. *That* —I can never forgive! [*Pause.*] I have given you greater luxuries than even Cleopatra enjoyed and you have repaid me with Cleopatra's morals and Cleopatra's fidelity! Once I had exquisite ideals of pure womanhood, but now all that is gone—now I have become a slave of political necessity! [*Pause.*]

JOSEPHINE

Oh, Napoleon—Napoleon! How can you be so cruel—you who loved me so when we were married?

NAPOLEON

True—*then* I did not know—your grace and your charm had bewitched me, as it had others—then I did not understand and appreciate your—disease! [*Pause.*] Never again dare to take me to task for what you imagine I have no right to do. Long, long ago you forfeited all claim to any consideration. Get up! [*She rises slowly.*] You go out that door. [*Points to door left in 2.*] And if you ever cross its portals without my having sent for you—I swear I'll divorce you—yes, though it costs me the empire!

[JOSEPHINE *crosses left slowly, shaking with sobs, and exits left in 2.* NAPOLEON *follows, closing and locking the door behind her. Then he hurries up stage center, draws*

aside the tapestry once more, opens the panel, picks up MARIE DUVAL *from the floor, where she had lain in a dead faint through it all, starts toward his bed-chamber with her, pauses, and then carries and places her on the couch down left, then stands and looks down at her.*

[*NOTE: As* NAPOLEON *stands gazing at the still, unconscious figure, so pitifully helpless and now so much in need of care and shelter, it must at once be made apparent to the audience by his manner that there has suddenly come to him a keen realization of her sweet, white purity and her crying need of human protection. Her weakness appeals to his paternal instinct. There can be no greater victory than that of innocence over force and this is exactly the battle which* MARIE DUVAL *wins here.*

[*After a time* NAPOLEON *goes up center slowly, closes the panel and draws the tapestry to its original position. Then he returns to his former station beside* MARIE. *He tries to revive her by using the contents of the bottle on the table. He smoothes her hair, pats her hands, listens to hear if her heart is beating, then gently shakes her and calls her name softly:*]

Marie—Marie!

[*Her eyes finally open and she looks up at him.*]

NAPOLEON

Ah, Marie—you have been unconscious so long—I—I was worried.

MARIE

[*Leaning on one hand and gazing at him terror-stricken.*] Oh!—Oh!—Oh!

[*Draws away from him in fright and repulsion.*]

NAPOLEON

[*Soothing her.*] Do not be frightened, Marie. You are all right now. You stood so long in that dark passageway, and the air there is so bad, that you became weak and fainted. Then I brought you here, that's all!

MARIE

[*In anguish.*] All—all! [*Weeps without restraint.*]

NAPOLEON

Yes, my dear, that is all. So—so calm yourself—please! You have not been harmed.

MARIE

[*Sitting up.*] Harmed!—*Have* I not been harmed? [*Begins to control herself. Gradually stops crying and speaks bitterly.*] Look at what you have forced upon me—see where I am and then tell me I have not been harmed. [*Short, half-hysterical laugh.*] I am that vilest thing on earth—the woman who loves one man and gives herself to another!

NAPOLEON

[*From now on he plays with her.*] You are morbid and hysterical. Believe me when I say that——

MARIE

[*Breaking in.*] Believe you? [*Laughs shortly.*] And you ask me to do that! If the people of France knew what you have imposed upon me, not one—no, not one in all France would ever believe in you again!

NAPOLEON

You are at liberty to tell them.

MARIE

That remark is like you, Sire. You know very well that I cannot do it, for if I tell on you I tell on myself.

NAPOLEON

Then you will hide what others might—be proud to tell.

MARIE

What are the others to me? I consider nothing except that the most powerful man in the world is to torture his weakest subject, that I am to be robbed of the only thing in the world which is left to me, that until I die I must walk the earth with an unclean body and a lost soul! [*Gradually working up.*] There is something wrong in the world—there is no justice anywhere—God has deserted me—when He will allow crimes like this to pass. But some time you will get your pay! [*Slowly.*] And just as sure—as that—I—am here—alone—and helpless—you—you——

[*Falls back exhausted.* NAPOLEON *quickly crosses right and exits right in 3, returning with a tray on which is a decanter of wine and two glasses. He places the tray on the desk right, and pours wine in one glass and brings this over to* MARIE.]

NAPOLEON

[*Offering her the wine.*] You are weak—ill. Take some, Marie, just a little, I beg of you.

[*He holds the glass to her lips. She puts one hand to the glass to steady it, and her hand, coming in contact with his hand, causes her to show by a gesture of abhorrence how she loathes his touch. She suffers him to hold the glass to her lips while she sips a little and then he returns to the desk right*

on which he places the glass. As he leisurely goes about pouring some wine for himself, and between sips of it as he drinks, he relates an incident to her, she meanwhile regaining her composure and becoming interested, is spite of herself, in the narrative.]

NAPOLEON

This situation here, between you and me, reminds me of something which happened during the Prussian war. We fought from early morning for the possession of a stream which flowed between the two armies. The loss of life was terrible, but the battle went on until late in the day without advantage to either side. Finally both armies ceased fighting from sheer exhaustion and then, as though by common consent, Prussians and French—all of them!—came to the banks of the river and intermingled as friends while they drank and washed together. This gave us all a chance to bathe our wounds, to better appreciate the good qualities of each other and, moreover, it taught us the absolute futility of further hostilities. [*Pause.*] This wine is the stream which flows between you and me!

MARIE

[*In a low voice.*] And I suppose you finally won—you always do—always!

NAPOLEON

[*Slowly.*] No, not always. There are some things I can never win. Ah, well—perhaps misfortune has its heroes.

MARIE

[*Fighting for time.*] What—what mockery it is to hear—to hear you speak of misfortune—you—with your wealth and power—you—surrounded by luxuries and comforts.

NAPOLEON

[*Bitterly.*] Comforts, Mon Dieu, comforts! I have had both poverty and luxury, but never comfort, and as for riches—riches!—no man in the world is so poor as the rich man who has no children.

MARIE

Children! Then your greatest desire is children?

NAPOLEON

Hah—such a question—and from *you!* Nothing but a child-like innocence would have asked me that. Are children my greatest desire?—I have no other desire—I never shall have. You believe me, don't you?

[*Looking at her intently.*]

MARIE

[*With lowered head.*] Yes, Sire, I—I believe you—now.

NAPOLEON

And now that we understand each other, let me remind you—yesterday we made a bargain! I have kept my part of the agreement and, as we made our bargain in good faith——

MARIE

[*Breaks in with a shrill laugh.*] Good faith! Brute force speaks of good faith! Mon Dieu!

NAPOLEON

You do not trust me as I trust you?

MARIE

Trust—what has trust got to do with—with——?

NAPOLEON

Everything. You should trust me more than you do. Did I not send you the pardon and the order for the release of M. Barras as I had agreed to do?

MARIE

[*Suddenly showing strange emotion.*] Yes—yes, you

have done all—that you said you would. You have done your part.

NAPOLEON

Then surely I must have trusted you implicitly! Had I not trusted you I should have been afraid that you might have sent the pardon and the order for the release of M. Barras to the prison to-day—instead of to-morrow, as you agreed.

MARIE

[*Showing by her manner that she has in fact already sent the pardon and order for release to* BARRAS.] Yes, yes—of course—I—I could have done that, couldn't I?

NAPOLEON

I gave you every chance to trick me if you chose to do so, but I knew you would keep faith with me. I drove a hard bargain, perhaps, but you agreed—you agreed and now——

MARIE

[*Standing abruptly.*] And now—now I must pay! [*Pause.*] Very well—I am here. Nothing I do from now on can cause me greater agony—greater anguish of mind, than I have already suffered. I have come to complete the bargain, Your Majesty!

[*Throws out her hands expressively.*]

NAPOLEON

[*Looking at her with queer intentness.*] So for one year you are to be mine!

MARIE

[*Monotonously.*] I am!

NAPOLEON

[*Still looking at her queerly.*] And have you thought about Monsieur Barras in the meantime?

MARIE

Have I thought! Mon Dieu—you think I would be here if I had not thought of *him* and of him alone? Who

am I that I should stand in the way of his freedom—and life?

NAPOLEON

Even now I'll give you the chance to leave Barras to his fate and save yourself. You have but to give me back the pardon and the order of release. So—what do you say?

MARIE

[*Covers her face with her hands.*] No—it is too late—too late!

NAPOLEON

[*Looks at her an instant, then goes to her and takes her hands from her face. Kindly.*] Look into my eyes, Marie. Look at me well and tell me what you see! [*She begins to stare at him.*] In my face can you find untruth? Do you see there any cruelty, or any lust?

MARIE

[*In a half-whisper.*] You mean—you mean that—that you are—are going to spare me?

[*For answer* NAPOLEON *crosses left to door left in 3, which he locks, and then comes down to her again.*]

NAPOLEON

There is nothing to prevent your leaving whenever you chose.

[*Lifting her hands on high, she gives audible voice to a sudden paroxysm of emotion.*]

MARIE

No, *no,* NO!—I can't believe it—I *won't* believe it! You're—you're giving me hope to punish me—you're going to——

NAPOLEON

[*Reproachfully.*] Marie!

[*She falls at his feet, clasps him about the knees and sobs her incoherent thanks.*]

NAPOLEON

Marie, you must control yourself.

[*He takes hold of her and lifts her up and as he does so there is a noise of a scuffle off left, several sharp, angry voices are heard—then comes a general racket as things are banged about, then the noise gradually dies down and ceases. The door left in 3 opens and* ROUSTAN *enters. He is breathing heavily and under stress of great excitement.*]

NAPOLEON

Well, what means this noise and outcry?

ROUSTAN

Your Majesty, an armed assassin was trying to force his way into your cabinet, but he has been overpowered by the guards and is held a prisoner.

NAPOLEON

An assassin!—who is he?

ROUSTAN

General—Barras! [MARIE *screams.*]

NAPOLEON

Barras!—But how did he get out of prison?

ROUSTAN

When searched there was found his pardon and order of release.

[NAPOLEON *turns slowly until he looks directly at* MARIE. *Then he says:*]

NAPOLEON

Ah!-h-h-h!

MARIE

[*In a wild frenzy of terror.*] Yes, yes—I did it—I broke my word and sent him the pardon and order of release to-day instead of to-morrow, and I'd do it again, a hundred times, if I had the chance. What woman

wouldn't, facing what I did?—How could I be *sure* you would let him go to-morrow?—What woman would trust the man who demanded of me what you did? And now —now you know why—why I did it!

NAPOLEON

Yes, I know—it is—the sex!

MARIE

What are you—going—to do?

NAPOLEON

[*Almost yelling.*] What am I going to do?

MARIE

Yes—with—with him?

NAPOLEON

Oh, with *him*

MARIE

Yes—did—did you think I'm afraid for—myself? Ha, ha—listen! [*Rapidly.*] Let him go—just order him released once more and taken to the frontier, anywhere!—only—only give him his life and then—then not for a year, but for the rest of my whole life, I'll be to you whatever you want me to be—I'll be faithful and devoted —I'll never complain about *anything*—have me beaten—starve me—cast me into the gutter as soon as you like—I don't care—I *don't* care—as long as you spare his life!

NAPOLEON

[*To* ROUSTAN, *who has remained immovable through it all, with his arms folded.*] Bring my sword!

[ROUSTAN *quickly exits left in 3.*]

MARIE

[*In a hushed voice.*] Your Majesty, what are you going to do? [*Enter* ROUSTAN *left in 3, with sword, which he carries to* NAPOLEON *and hands to him.*] Oh —oh! You're going to kill him!—oh,—oh!

NAPOLEON

[*To* ROUSTAN.] When I open that door [*indicating left in 3*] let Barras enter. That is all!

[*Business with the sword.*]

ROUSTAN

Your Majesty—he is strong—he is half-mad—I—I am afraid he——

NAPOLEON

You need not be. He is the one man I could kill with my naked hands! [ROUSTAN *exits left in 3.*]

MARIE

Mon Dieu—you can't—you will *not!*—do this awful thing!

NAPOLEON

Be quiet, will you!—You talk and act like a crazy woman! [*Lays sword down on table right.*]

MARIE

Is it—is it any wonder? See what you've made of me—see what you've done to me!—and now—what—what more!

NAPOLEON

Nothing more—that is—nothing which you need fear if—if you will obey me—implicitly!

MARIE

You mean—you give him his life?

NAPOLEON

Yes, I give him his life. And now—will you do as I say?

MARIE

Will I?—As long as there is a drop of blood left in my body!

NAPOLEON

I ask nothing—*nothing* of you, do you hear? Except obedience. Go in that room there [*pointing to chamber*

right in 3], and remain until I come and let you out. If anyone calls to you, answer them, but say no more. Understand? Now go!

MARIE

Yes—yes, at once.

[*She starts over right and as she passes him he grasps one hand and stops her.*]

NAPOLEON

You are—not afraid? [*Shakes her head "no."*] Why?

MARIE

You have never lied to me.

NAPOLEON

Yes, I have—yesterday—when I said Barras was to be executed. That was not true, but you—you were worth that lie—yesterday.

MARIE

Yesterday—ah, yesterday was a long time ago!

[*He drops her hand and she crosses right and exits right in 3,* NAPOLEON *follows, locks the door and puts the key in his pocket. Then, after rearranging the decanter and glasses on the table so that they appear in full view, and taking* MARIE'S *wrap up from where it has lain on the couch left and spreading it out there, he goes up to the entrance left in 3, opens the door, and then slowly crosses right to the chair right of the desk and sits.* BARRAS *enters left in 3 and stands center glaring at* NAPOLEON, *until* ROUSTAN *has entered the same entrance and exits, closing the door left in 3 as he does so.*]

NAPOLEON

[*As the door closes.*] I suppose you will always regret, Monsieur, that you were not able to—kill me?

BARRAS

Yes, always, and—thousands of others will also regret it.

NAPOLEON

Perhaps it will ease your mind to know that it will not be burdened with regrets, or anything else, but for a —very—little—while—longer!

BARRAS

Knowing your skill in the art of deliberate murder, I suppose you will treat me as you have the others who have been so bold as to oppose you.

NAPOLEON

Barras, this is the last talk we shall ever have—you are to die within the hour. Let us be frank, at least, in these final moments. What changed you so suddenly to a Bourbon?

BARRAS

The same thing which changed you over night from a Republican to a—despot!—love of power!

NAPOLEON

And why did you seek my downfall?

BARRAS

Because you have betrayed the French people.

NAPOLEON

And still—out of 4,000,000 votes only 2,500 were against hereditary succession! No, I have not betrayed the French nation, but—*you* are the traitor. While still a general in my army you held letters-patent, issued by the Count of Provence, appointing you royal commissioner to proclaim and re-establish the Bourbon monarchy. That appointment will not be taken from you. [BARRAS *bows.*] No—in a little while it will be pinned on your breast as a target for the firing squad!

BARRAS

I wonder, Sire, if you are really enjoying this?

NAPOLEON

Yes, much more than you imagine, Barras, I would like to know why you hate me so bitterly. Is it envy?

BARRAS

One does not envy you in—some of your possessions! [NAPOLEON *shows by business that the thrust has gone home.*] I hate you because you are a sham and a—coward!

NAPOLEON

A sham?

BARRAS

Yes—you are not genuine—you are nothing but a political trickster. You don't love the common people—you love no one but—Napoleon!

NAPOLEON

No?

BARRAS

No! You are a great actor. When you review the troops and call a private from the ranks, telling him that you remember him by his face for some heroic deed in a certain battle, and then place the cross of honor on his breast—— [*Pause.*]

NAPOLEON

Well?

BARRAS

It's a lie! You have never seen him before—but you get the information beforehand from his captain!

NAPOLEON

So, so!—and a coward, too?

BARRAS

Of the worst kind—I have watched you in many battles. You are never within range of the enemy.

NAPOLEON

[*Stung to retort.*] A coward, eh? Was I a coward when you—ha, hah!—under *you!*—I defended the Con-

vention—when generals were dropping like leaves in the fall? Was I a coward in Italy and Egypt? There is a difference between General Bonaparte and—Napoleon, the Emperor!

BARRAS

Yes—having won the stake there is no need of further gambling!

NAPOLEON

And is that the reason why you hate me so—why you tried to murder me here to-night?

BARRAS

[*Venomously.*] You will go down to history as a—royal—cuckold!

NAPOLEON

And you will go down to history as the unspeakable. History overlooks a man's morals but never forgets his treachery! Sit down, Barras. Let your last moments be in comfort.

[BARRAS *sits on the couch left center, on the wrap which* MARIE *wore when she came.*]

BARRAS

Is it necessary for me to remain longer?

NAPOLEON

Just a moment. The smoke of your executioners' muskets is almost in your nose. Your end is so near—why not say what brought you here to-night?

BARRAS

[*In a blind rage.*] When I received my pardon and release, I was told that you—you were about to——[*Stands with one hand raised threateningly, then drops to his seat again.*] I can see now that was just a ruse of Fouché's to make me half insane—to drive me here

in a wild fury to kill you, in order that you might capture me in the attempt and so have a good reason to have me shot at once. It was a pretty trap and I fell into it!

NAPOLEON

It was not a trap, Barras, and Fouché did not lie.

BARRAS

[*Gazing at him fixedly.*] What—what do you mean?

NAPOLEON

[*Tapping the wine glasses.*] See these? Two glasses empty. It's very good wine. Doesn't it look as though I had been entertaining some one?

BARRAS

[*Trying to control himself.*] Possibly—you have been known to entertain well for—certain purposes!

NAPOLEON

Quite right, my dear Barras, your penetration is remarkable. And now do you remember what room that is? [*Points to door right in 3.*]

BARRAS

Yes—it is—your bedchamber!

NAPOLEON

Again right. No—Fouché did not lie to you, Barras. He gave you exact information, only—only you came—TOO LATE! [*Gives way to loud laughter.*]

BARRAS

You are lying—just to torture me. I know better than that, anyway. Nothing [*Savagely*], no, nothing!—would ever make her do that!

NAPOLEON

No? Ha, hah! What are you sitting on? [*Pause while* BARRAS *picks up wrap and examines it.*] Whose

is it? Ha, ha, ahah! Whose is that? Now do you believe you are too late?

BARRAS

No—no, I—I don't! It's all a game—just your way to get revenge for—for—*you* know what!

[*Laughs loudly.*]

NAPOLEON

This is a splendid joke for you to laugh at—your final conscious moment will tell you that on your last day on earth your—Marie—was—unfaithful. [*Gets up, laughing, and walks up stage toward center and there stands and faces down.*] Yes, indeed it is a fine joke!

BARRAS

Ah-h-h-h! You can't taunt me with that! I—know—better!

NAPOLEON

Oh, you know better, do you?

BARRAS

Yes, I know your revengeful nature and—I know—the motive for your desire to be avenged.

NAPOLEON

You don't believe your Marie has made a fool of you?

BARRAS

No!

NAPOLEON

You don't believe she has been here?

BARRAS

No!

NAPOLEON

That even now she is here—in that—ROOM?

BARRAS

NO!

NAPOLEON

Ah, you don't—then call—her name—and see! [*Pause.*] Hah—now you're not so sure?

BARRAS

[*Rather low.*] Mar—Marie! [*Pause with no answer.*] So—I know you were lying!

NAPOLEON

Wait!—Try once more—a little louder!

BARRAS

Marie!

MARIE

[*From off stage left in 3.*] Yes, I am here!

[BARRAS *grasps his own throat with one hand as if to stifle an outcry.*]

BARRAS

[*In agony.*] Ah—ah-h-h—ah-h-h-h!

NAPOLEON

[*Laughing with demoniac glee.*] Now will you believe it?

[BARRAS *rushes to the door right in 3 and tries to get in. Again* NAPOLEON *laughs.*]

BARRAS

Marie—Marie!

NAPOLEON

[*Mimicing him.*] Marie—Marie! [*Laughs.*] Whose Marie now?

[BARRAS *staggers from the door right in 3 to the desk and falls on it, where he lies moaning, while* NAPOLEON *continues to laugh until the door left in 3 opens and* ROUSTAN *enters.*]

ROUSTAN

Your Majesty, Monsieur Fouché is here.

NAPOLEON

He timed it well, but often the best plans fail. Tell him in a moment.

[ROUSTAN *exits left in 3.* BARRAS *begins business with sword.* NAPOLEON *crosses to door right in 3, unlocks it and beckons to* MARIE, *who comes out slowly.* NAPOLEON *points to* BARRAS *and holds her when she would run to him.*]

Barras! [BARRAS *looks up and then stands.*] Here is the bravest woman in the world. No man but you has ever—touched the hem of her gown. I have been making you suffer because I want you to know how it feels to have the woman you care for—caressed—by another. For all you have ever done to me I have been fully repaid in the last ten minutes. Take this wonderful woman and cherish her—always. Men seldom find her like.

[NAPOLEON *crosses left and opens door left in 3.* MARIE *and* BARRAS *embrace as* NAPOLEON *recrosses right to his desk where he sits.* FOUCHÉ *enters left in 3 and stands by desk up.* TALLEYRAND *follows* FOUCHÉ, *entering left in 3 and standing center.*]

Ah, Talleyrand—you, too?

TALLEYRAND

Yes, Your Majesty. I bring the thanks of the delegation from Rome and—they accept what you give them.

NAPOLEON

Rome never refuses anything! Monsieur, you will cause it to be ordered that General Barras has been appointed a special commissioner to Spain. He will leave at once with Madame—his wife.

MARIE

Oh!—Oh, Sire!

NAPOLEON

Not a word! [TALLEYRAND *bows and exits left in 3.*] Was there something important, Fouché?

FOUCHÉ

I merely desired to learn about Monsieur Barras.

NAPOLEON

Yes? And you may also learn something about yourself—you are no longer—Minister of Police!

[FOUCHÉ *bows, crosses left to door in 3 and turns.*]

FOUCHÉ

May I ask your Majesty—why—I am degraded?

NAPOLEON

Yes—for sending the Empress on a fool's errand!

[FOUCHÉ *bows and exits left in 3. Both* BARRAS *and* MARIE *start to speak, but* NAPOLEON *waves them off and points to door left in 3. Then he turns down stage in his chair and looks off with a set expression.* BARRAS *and* MARIE *cross left softly, exit in 3 and close the door.* NAPOLEON *stands, goes around above the desk until he reaches center when he suddenly throws both hands above his head and laughs in bitter despair.*]

Napoleon I—Lord of the universe and the most—miserable—man—in it!

[NAPOLEON *stands, long enough for this soul-wracking line to sink home, then he looks intently toward the door left in 2 an instant, after which he walks quickly and softly to it, turns the key quietly, and then returns to his former position at stage center. THE DOOR left in 2 opens and* JOSEPHINE *enters. Her manner is defiant and*

imperious, just the attitude to drive NAPOLEON *into a quick and merciless fury, but he controls himself, merely looking at her with that terrible gaze of bridled hatred which always showed in his eyes at moments of insane rage.* JOSEPHINE *advances toward him and pauses at left center, and a little down.*]

JOSEPHINE

[*With nagging laugh.*] You did not send for me and yet I have come. I remember very well what you said you would do if I came—unbid—the divorce!—but, pouf!—I am not afraid—you would not—dare! [NAPOLEON *makes no sign except to look at her and they hold each other's gaze an instant. Then she shrugs her shoulders.*] You can rule all France by force, but you cannot browbeat me. I am a ward of the Church of Rome—I am Josephine, Empress of the French and you would—divorce me? Hah, hah, *you—would—not—dare!*

NAPOLEON

[*Slowly and half-breathing the words.*] You are Empress of the French because I made you so! *My* hands placed the crown on your head—*my* hands can remove it. The Church of Rome! [*Sneers.*] That same church which joined you to me in marriage shall unjoin us—I—Napoleon!—shall cause the Church of Rome to do my will and my will is that we—are—to—be—divorced!

JOSEPHINE

[*Shrieks.*] Napoleon—Napoleon—I did not mean it—I did not mean it!

NAPOLEON

[*Continuing in the same tone and carrying it up until the end of the speech.*] It is too late! You are now just a woman. Between you and me there has been no marriage because marriage is only real when there is an off-

spring! And so—it is done! I shall no longer be unspeakably miserable—I *shall* be a father! I have but to reach out my hand to the royal houses of Russia, or Austria, and grasp her—she who will be the mother of my children, and then—then in the new union of our bodies will come the new union of *our* Europe, then will come—peace in all the world, and to me—Napoleon, the father, a glorious peace—to my soul!

[NAPOLEON *finishes the speech with eyes uplifted, as one inspired, with loud, ringing voice. When he concludes he turns abruptly right, without even one look at* JOSEPHINE, *who is staggering toward him, then crosses right quickly, opens the door of his bedchamber right, exits, and crashes the door behind him.* JOSEPHINE *plunges face down on the couch meanwhile, and rolls off to the floor, face up, just as* NAPOLEON *slams the door.*]

CURTAIN

THE FOURTH ACT

THE FOURTH ACT

SCENE: NAPOLEON'S *last days at St. Helena. Showing the room at Longwood where he dictated the story of his life's achievements. An interior in 3. Up stage, wide French windows through which may be seen a vast expanse of ocean. Down right a high latticed window through which comes a strong morning light, spreading over a small, round table, right center, and on which is a marble bust of the King of Rome* [*faced up stage*]. *Left of table, large, wide, easy armchair with cushion at back and a cushion on floor in front of chair. Stage left, and a little up, so as to be on the edge of the light from the window over right, a common deal table, with a plain chair left of table, chair facing right. On this table, papers, ink well, quill pens, etc. Up left an entrance.*

DISCOVERED: *At the curtain,* NAPOLEON *is disclosed sitting in the large chair right center. He is asleep. Spread over his lap is the map of Europe. The strong morning light from the high latticed window right, falls upon him directly, throwing his still figure into clear relief, as against the rather weaker light outside of this radiance. Off stage effect of battle in distance.*

THE MAN WITHIN

After a short pause NAPOLEON *breathes heavily two or three times, moves his head uneasily from side to side, places one hand to his stomach, meanwhile showing by a changing facial expression that he is in pain, suddenly coughs fitfully, but in a wracking manner, as though weak and half-strangled through shortness of breath, then opens his eyes and gazes about him in a dazed fashion.*

At the sound of his coughing the door left opens slowly and LAS CASES *looks in. Seeing* NAPOLEON'S *head move,* LAS CASES *enters, closes the door, and comes down to the deal table left center, where he stops.*

NAPOLEON *shows that he hears* LAS CASES, *but he does not turn his head.*

NAPOLEON

[*Very slowly, almost labored.*] Ah, Las Cases, I am back to earth and—to you. It does not matter. For me there is no peace, even in sleep. The man who sows battles reaps a red harvest! Always I am—in battle after battle and then—after the bands stop playing, comes wagon after wagon to gather up—the dead! After me—the dead—always the—dead!

LAS CASES

I am sorry, Sire. Such depressing visions may rob your work of—inspiration.

NAPOLEON

Inspiration! Nobody is inspired. Inspiration is to—calculate quickly—genius is to think and see before anybody else. That is all I ever did.

LAS CASES

[*With a little laugh.*] Oh, Sire, you are too modest.

NAPOLEON

[*Catching his mood.*] Ah, Las Cases—good and faith-

ful Las Cases—you are in better temper this morning. I vexed you yesterday, and you showed it, but let a night pass after the offence of the day and—the offence is no more! Night is a good counsellor, mon enfant. It blots out fury and leaves a place for reason and judgment in the morning. Well, well—and now we must to work. [Las Cases *sits left.*] Where were we when we stopped? [*Coughs.*] Yes, I remember, I remember—it was on what I have done for France—— [*Sighs and speaks slowly.*] What I have done for France! You need not look up the reports, Las Cases. I remember every figure —I have never forgotten anything in my life—so take it down exactly—it will be correct. In ten years I gave France for good roads—300,000,000 francs; for bridges, 30,000,000; for canals, 125,000,000; for public works in Paris alone, 100,000,000; for seaports, 125,000,000; for other public works 200,000,000. Over 900,000,000 francs, Las Cases, did I give France in ten years. On the imperial palaces I spent 60,000,000 francs more, a total of 960,000,000 which I took from Europe and gave to France, in ten years, Las Cases,—in ten years!—Ah, if I could have had ten years more, only ten years more! [*With infinite weariness.*] There was so much to do—there was so little done. Las Cases, I heard yesterday that Wellington has a bust of me in his hall which he—uses for a hat rack! The English should remember that after war men remain, that a defeated foe has rights the conqueror should respect. When people ride over my roads a hundred years from now—whose name will be on their lips? Ha, hah! One thousand years from now —who will be glorified in history—will it be Wellington or—Napoleon? Mais oui, mon enfant, time will tell—time will tell! Another thing I have done for France is her laws. My throne fell, and what is a throne but four pieces of wood covered with velvet?—but my laws, the Code Napoleon, they will remain as long as

memory remains in man. My victories, my empire, my glory—all will fade, but my laws—le loi—never! Yes, Las Cases, no man can do more for his country than pass good laws, and I had to overcome the prejudices of eighteen centuries when I founded them on reason, when I made laws for the good of all, when I made laws which punished but did not avenge, when I showed the judges that they must not confound their duties with their antipathies. Always my motto was "Everything for the French people!" I had a great power, but I could not have done all that had *I* really not been the State itself. Men should be governed as the greatest number wish to be governed and when Europe cried that I was a despot, did Europe consider that my own people knew better, that when the question of the succession was put to a vote, that out of 4,000,000 votes only 2,500 were against it? Hah, a despot, eh! The greatest conquest is that obtained over ignorance—so there is yet much to conquer in Europe! And England boasts of her—— [*Scornfully.*] Public Opinion—Public Opinion! Hah! And what is Public Opinion? It's like a woman of the street—always willing to prostitute itself for money! Yes, Las Cases, my ambition was great, but it always rested on the will of the masses—no distinction of birth—all careers open to talent. Some day, Las Cases, it will be like that in all France! Only ten years more, Las Cases, and I would have made the body politic perfectly healthy, I would have given France a cleaner countenance—I would have shown them the difference between a constitutional Emperor and the old Kings of France, but it was not to be, Las Cases, it was not to be, *that* is the pity of it all, that is the pity of it! When I think of what I accomplished, of what I might have done if I had the time, of the ignominy and suffering heaped on me here by this Englishman—Lowe, hah, Lowe in name and character, when I think of my humiliating and bitter end [*Laughs with*

great bitterness], I am reminded of that famous word of dear old Cambronne's! And the English, Las Cases, they drive me mad with helpless rage—they say I did it all for my own pocket—for myself! Was it for myself that I spent more of the ten years of my reign under the enemy's fire than I did in my royal residence? Was it for myself that I personally commanded in seven hundred skirmishes and battles? Was it for myself in 1796, when France could neither pay, nor clothe, nor feed the army, that I went to Italy and—brought back a kingdom? Was it for myself that in ten years I changed France from a bankrupt nation to a country which had more specie than all the rest of Europe? Was it for myself that I maintained huge armies all over the world, made France the richest nation in the universe, and finally at Waterloo went down under incompetence and treachery? Ah, no, mon ami, Napoleon's eagles came from Napoleon, and they flew over Europe *not* for Napoleon, but for—France! [*Pause while* LAS CASES *writes on and then the latter looks up at the other when he has finished.* NAPOLEON *is looking off stage, preoccupied.* LAS CASES *discreetly coughs behind his hand to attract attention, which brings* NAPOLEON *out of his reverie.*] That is all to-day—I do not feel equal to more.

LAS CASES

[*Gathering papers and rising.*] Yes, Sire—we have made good progress.

NAPOLEON

Progress—a great word. When we do not progress it is—the end. [LAS CASES *starts up, but halts when* NAPOLEON *speaks.*] Las Cases, you have said nothing about —Marie Louise. Is there yet—no word—from—Austria?

LAS CASES

[*Bowing his head.*] No word—Sire—nothing!

NAPOLEON

[*With sudden fire.*] True—even Marie Louise—I have no Empress now, but I have—a son! Bring him to me. [LAS CASES *comes down right, picks up the marble bust from the table carefully and hands it to* NAPOLEON, *then goes up stage and exits left. Takes white marble bust of the infant King of Rome and holds it before him. For a moment he gazes at the likeness with a rapt expression on his face.*] Ah, my boy, my boy! Once more we are alone. [*Smiles very tenderly.*] Did they think by insults and degradation they could humble me? Did they think by stripping me of power and wealth they could make me believe I was disinherited by humanity and disowned by God? Did they think I cared when they took the world from me—for it *was* my world!—yes, I did not care when they took my world away, for then—I had you! [*Folds the bust in a close embrace.*] They were fools to think they could take from me the best I have when the best of me shall live on in you. I have only started what you shall finish. See! [*Replaces bust on the table right near his elbow and talks to the image as he points to map.*] Montenotte, where I began to climb, and then up, to Lodi, Marengo, Ulm, Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, Wagram! The steps were many and bloody but—you shall profit by them. And then on to Moscow, but not in winter, my boy, not in winter. Over here is a little Channel and there—London. [*Chuckles.*] It will be a pleasant journey for the son of Napoleon when he goes to pay a debt his father owes the English for—this! Down here, Gibraltar, where you can see Africa awaiting you, and here the gateway to the East, Constantinople, which you will open for a wealth untold. Germany will want some of that but—[*chuckles*]—the Hun is a pig, a pig—and keep him safe in his pen, always in his own pen. [*Sighs.*] Then—then over Europe shall spread the light of France and all, ah, my son, all for you!

[*Again takes up the bust from the table.*] And so they think when I go all is over! No, no, it is only beginning, for I shall live bigger and stronger in you. [*Folds bust in his arms.*] There is no real hereafter for a man, no Heaven unless a father is there—waiting—for—his son!

[*Pause, during which* NAPOLEON *closes his eyes, drops his head forward and apparently goes to sleep. Off stage effect of battle in distance. Then his arms slowly relax and loosen, allowing the bust to roll from his grasp. It drops on the floor at his feet and breaks into pieces.*]

THE END

DOROTHY'S NEIGHBORS.

A brand new comedy in four acts, by Marie Doran, author of "The New Co-Ed," "Tempest and Sunshine," and many other successful plays. 4 males, 7 females. The scenes are extremely easy to arrange; two plain interiors and one exterior, a garden, or, if necessary, the two interiors will answer. Costumes modern. Plays 2½ hours.

The story is about vocational training, a subject now widely discussed; also, the distribution of large wealth.

Back of the comedy situation and snappy dialogue there is good logic and a sound moral in this pretty play, which is worthy the attention of the experienced amateur. It is a clean, wholesome play, particularly suited to high school production. Price, 30 Cents.

MISS SOMEBODY ELSE.

A modern play in four acts by Marion Short, author of "The Touchdown," etc. 6 males, 10 females. Two interior scenes. Costumes modern. Plays 2¼ hours.

This delightful comedy has gripping dramatic moments, unusual character types, a striking and original plot and is essentially modern in theme and treatment. The story concerns the adventures of Constance Darcy, a multi-millionaire's young daughter. Constance embarks on a trip to find a young man who had been in her father's employ and had stolen a large sum of money. She almost succeeds, when suddenly all traces of the young man are lost. At this point she meets some old friends who are living in almost want and, in order to assist them through motives benevolent, she determines to sink her own aristocratic personality in that of a refined but humble little Irish waitress with the family that are in want. She not only carries her scheme to success in assisting the family, but finds romance and much tense and lively adventure during the period of her incognito, aside from capturing the young man who had defrauded her father. The story is full of bright comedy lines and dramatic situations and is highly recommended for amateur production. This is one of the best comedies we have ever offered with a large number of female characters. The dialogue is bright and the play is full of action from start to finish; not a dull moment in it. This is a great comedy for high schools and colleges, and the wholesome story will please the parents and teachers. We strongly recommend it.

Price, 30 Cents.

PURPLE AND FINE LINEN.

An exceptionally pretty comedy of Puritan New England, in three acts, by Amita B. Fairgrieve and Helena Miller. 9 male, 5 female characters.

This is the Lend A Hand Smith College prize play. It is an admirable play for amateurs, is rich in character portrayal of varied types and is not too difficult while thoroughly pleasing. Price, 30 Cents.

(The Above Are Subject to Royalty When Produced)

THE RETURN OF HI JINKS.

A comedy in four acts, by Marion Short, author of "The Varsity Coach," "The Touch-Down," etc. 6 males, 8 females. Costumes modern. One interior scene.

This comedy is founded upon and elaborated from a farce comedy in two acts written by J. H. Horta, and originally produced at Tuft's College.

Hiram Poynter Jinks, a Junior in Hoosic College (Willie Collier type), and a young moving picture actress (Mary Pickford type), are the leading characters in this lively, modern farce.

Thomas Hodge, a Senior, envious of the popularity of Jinks, wishes to think up a scheme to throw ridicule upon him during a visit of the Hoosic Glee Club to Jinks's home town. Jinks has obligingly acted as a one-day substitute in a moving picture play, in which there is a fire scene, and this gives Hodge his cue. He sends what seems to be a bona fide account of Jinks's heroism at a Hoosic fire to Jinks's home paper. Instead of repudiating his laurels as expected, Jinks decides to take a flyer in fame, confirms the fake story, confesses to being a hero and is adored by all the girls, to the chagrin and discomfiture of Hodge. Of course, the truth comes out at last, but Jinks is not hurt thereby, and his romance with Mimi Mayflower comes to a successful termination.

This is a great comedy for amateurs. It is full of funny situations and is sure to please. Price, 30 Cents.

JUNE.

A most successful comedy-drama in four acts, by Marie Doran, author of "The New Co-Ed," "Tempest and Sunshine," "Dorothy's Neighbors," etc. 4 males, 8 females. One interior scene. Costumes modern. Plays 2¼ hours.

This play has a very interesting group of young people. June is an appealing little figure, an orphan living with her aunt. There are a number of delightful, life-like characters: the sorely tried, likeable Mrs. Hopkins, the amusing, haughty Miss Banks of the glove department, the lively Tilly and Milly, who work in the store, and ambitious Snoozer; Mrs. Hopkins's only son, who aspires to be President of the United States, but finds his real sphere is running the local trolley car. The play is simplicity itself in the telling of an every-day story, and the scenic requirements call for only one set, a room in the boarding house of Mrs. Hopkins, while an opportunity is afforded to introduce any number of extra characters. Musical numbers may be introduced, if desired. Price, 30 Cents.

TEMPEST AND SUNSHINE.

A comedy drama in four acts, by Marie Doran. 5 males and 3 females. One exterior and three interior scenes. Plays about 2 hours.

Every school girl has revelled in the sweet simplicity and gentleness of the characters interwoven in the charms that Mary J. Holmes commands in her story of "Tempest and Sunshine." We can strongly recommend this play as one of the best plays for high school production published in recent years.

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A comedy in four acts, by Marion Short. 8 males, 6 females, but any number of characters can be introduced in the ensembles. Costumes modern. One interior scene throughout the play. Time, 2½ hours.

This play, written for the use of clever amateurs, is the story of life in Siddell, a Pennsylvania co-educational college. It deals with the vicissitudes and final triumph of the Siddell Football Eleven, and the humorous and dramatic incidents connected therewith.

"The Touch-Down" has the true varsity atmosphere, college songs are sung, and the piece is lively and entertaining throughout. High schools will make no mistake in producing this play. We strongly recommend it as a high-class and well-written comedy. Price, 30 Cents.

HURRY, HURRY, HURRY.

A comedy in three acts, by LeRoy Arnold. 5 males, 4 females. One interior scene. Costumes modern. Plays 2¼ hours.

The story is based on the will of an eccentric aunt. It stipulates that her pretty niece must be affianced before she is twenty-one, and married to her fiancé within a year, if she is to get her spinster relative's million. Father has nice notions of honor and fails to tell daughter about the will, so that she may make her choice untrammeled by any other consideration than that of true love. The action all takes place in the evening the midnight of which will see her reach twenty-one. Time is therefore short, and it is hurry, hurry, hurry, if she is to become engaged and thus save her father from impending bankruptcy.

The situations are intrinsically funny and the dialogue is sprightly. The characters are natural and unaffected and the action moves with a snap such as should be expected from its title. Price, 30 Cents.

THE VARSITY COACH.

A three-act play of college life, by Marion Short, specially adapted to performance by amateurs or high school students. 5 males, 6 females, but any number of boys and girls may be introduced in the action of the play. Two settings necessary, a college boy's room and the university campus. Time, about 2 hours.

Like many another college boy, "Bob" Selby, an all-round popular college man, becomes possessed of the idea that athletic prowess is more to be desired than scholarship. He is surprised in the midst of a "spread" in his room in Regatta week by a visit from his aunt who is putting him through college. Aunt Serena, "a lady of the old school and the dearest little woman in the whole world," has hastened to make this visit to her adored nephew under the mistaken impression that he is about to receive the Fellowes prize for scholarship. Her grief and chagrin when she learns that instead of the prize Robert has received "a pink card," which is equivalent to suspension for poor scholarship, gives a touch of pathos to an otherwise jolly comedy of college life. How the repentant Robert more than redeems himself, carries off honors at the last, and in the end wins Ruth, the faithful little sweetheart of the "Prom" and the classroom makes a story of dramatic interest and brings out very clearly certain phases of modern college life. There are several opportunities for the introduction of college songs and "stunts." Price, 30 Cents.

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